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Héraud · *Videna* · 1854



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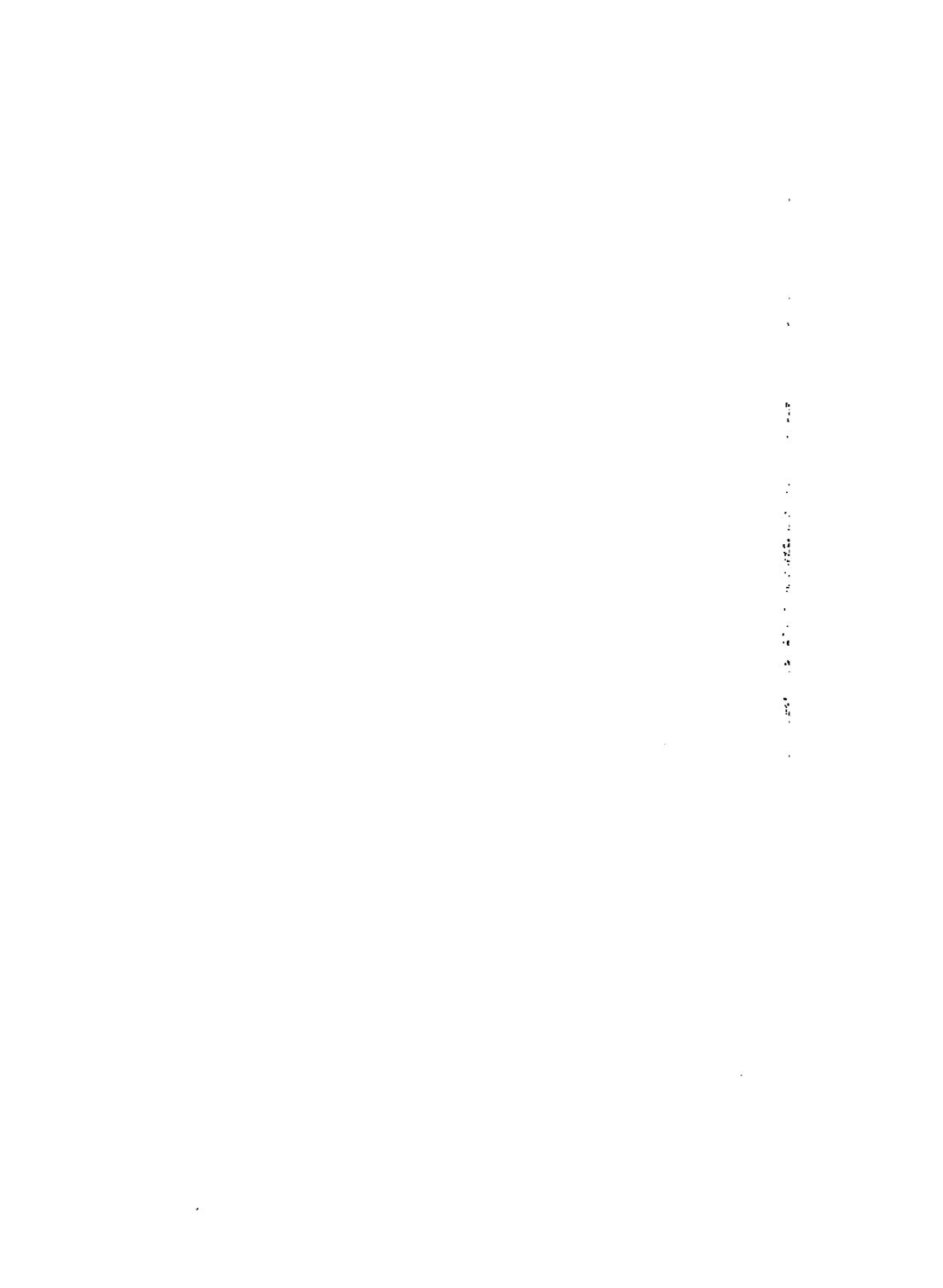


FROM THE
KENNETH MATHESON TAYLOR
FUND

GIVEN IN 1899 BY
JESSIE TAYLOR PHILIPS

IN MEMORY OF HER BROTHER
KENNETH MATHESON TAYLOR
(Class of 1890)

FOR ENGLISH LITERATURE



VIDENA.

BY

JOHN A. HERAUD.

Price: Half-a-crown.



VIDENA;

OR,

THE MOTHER'S TRAGEDY.

A Legend of Early Britain.

BY

JOHN A. HERAUD.

"Here ended Brutus' sacred progeny,
Which had seven hundred years this scepter borne,
With high renowne and great felicity."

SPENSER.

LONDON:

C. MITCHELL, RED LION COURT, FLEET STREET.

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Taylor fund

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TO MY

BELOVED FRIEND,

GEORGE PATTEN, Esq., A.R.A.,

I DEDICATE THIS

DRAMA.



P R E F A C E.

THIS, and my previous tragedy, "The Roman Brother," are upon cognate themes; indeed, there appears to be no doubt that the specific chronicle of Geoffrey of Monmouth was borrowed from the story of the Roman Caracalla. The composition of that play led to the writing of this. They now stand in contrast with each other: the present exhibiting the immediate execution of maternal vengeance on fratricide; and the former the extension of a mother's pardon towards her surviving offspring. The ultimate result, however, is the same in both cases: destruction falls on parent and son; only in the last-named instance it is longer impending. But the interval is filled with circumstances of horror more terribly penal than death itself. Moreover, the present is a tragedy of action, the former drama one of meditation.

The story on which the following scenes are founded is told not only by Geoffrey of Monmouth, in his

“Chronicles,” as above intimated, but by Milton, in his “History of England;”* and by Spenser, in his “Faëry Queen.” It also forms the subject of the first play in the English language, the performance of which, at Whitehall, before Queen Elizabeth, 18th January, 1561, is signalised in dramatic annals as “the birthday of English Tragedy.” A prominent situation in the first act was suggested by a classical incident. Manlius Torquatus, a celebrated Roman, whose youth was distinguished by a cheerful disposition, but whose promising talents were impeded by a difficulty of articulation, was by his father, unwilling to expose his son’s rusticity at Rome, detained in the country. This conduct being publicly censured, Marius Pomponius, the tribune, cited old Torquatus to answer for his un-paternal behaviour. Young Manlius, being informed of this, entered, with a dagger in his hand, the house of the tribune, whom he made solemnly promise to drop the accusation. This action endeared Manlius to the people. See *Livy* and *Valerius Maximus*.

The costume of the following tragedy (and indeed of the tragedy of “King Lear” also) should be properly Brito-Roman, or Brito-Grecian, recollecting that the characters are of Trojan descent. As the chief advan-

* Who therein observes, “I have determined to bestow the telling over even of these reputed tales; be it for nothing else but in favour of our English poets and rhetoricians, who, by their art, will know how to use them judiciously.”

tage of placing a British story in a fabulous period consists in its affording opportunity for the *ideal*, it is evident that the accessories throughout should be remarkable for their beauty and dignity. There should be nothing in either the costume or scenery to confound the era with the Saxon. To these suggestions so much attention has been paid, by the enlightened and liberal management of the Marylebone Theatre in the getting-up of this tragedy, that my acknowledgment becomes a duty. The care, moreover, bestowed on the rehearsals enables me to predict the result with sufficient assurance. For the complete impersonation of the two principal characters, by Mr. and Mrs. J. William Wallack—two parts, the extreme difficulty of which involves a responsibility not to be undertaken without decided self-consciousness of power—I am profoundly indebted to those two great performers, and not less than heroic representatives of *Videna* and *Gorbudoc*. They have most satisfactorily succeeded in scaling one of those classical elevations by which the daring alone approximate the divine; and must henceforward be reckoned among the Titans of their art. Nor may the Poet himself, whatever his aim or achievement, claim a more perfect triumph. In its attempts at excellence, it is impossible for created intelligence to assume rightfully a loftier appellation. The height on which the standard is planted demands an infinite “Excelsior;” and this, as I take it, is the moral of the old fable. To

Miss Cleveland likewise I would convey my sense of the promise manifested by her well-studied assumption of the part of the juvenile heroine. Indeed, to the company in general, every member of which had not merely to indicate a slight sketch but elaborately to realize a full-length portrait, is rightly owing not only the private recognition of the author's gratitude, but the public testimony of the critic's approbation.

Last and not least, my thanks are due to my young and excellent friend, Mr. Alfred Patten, for several sketches for the architectural scenery of the play, and in particular for the group of statues representing the line of Brutus; and to Mr. Shalders, for the skilful introduction of atmospheric effects throughout, the invention of several striking scenes, and the brilliant execution of all.

[*Certain passages in the text are necessarily omitted in representation.*]

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

As performed at the Marylebone Theatre, 23rd October, 1854.

GORBUDOC, <i>King of Britain</i>	Mr. J. William Wallack.
FERREX, <i>his Elder Son</i>	Mr. George Orvell.
PORREO, <i>his Younger Son</i>	Mr. Edgar.
DUNWARRO, <i>his Counsellor and Successor</i>	Mr. Wallis.
HERMON, <i>Friend of Ferrex</i>	Mr. G. Tanner.
ENYON, <i>Friend of Porreo</i>	Mr. C. Sennet.
DUKES—OF CAMBEIA	Mr. Bertram.
OF LOEGRIS } Mute	Mr. Travers.
OF ALBANY }	Mr. Hamilton.
DORDAN, <i>Jester and Poet Laureate of the Court</i>	Miss Wilkins.
PHILANDER, <i>a Page</i>	Miss Garthwaite.
EUBULUS, <i>a Secretary</i>	Mr. Shade.
PRIEST OF APOLLO	Mr. Wilkins.
SMITH	Mr. T. Robertson.
VIDENA, <i>Queen of Britain</i>	Mrs. J. W. Wallack.
MARCELLA, <i>Dunwarro's Daughter</i>	Miss Cleveland.

SCENE.—*Trinovant (London) in Britain, except 1st scene of Act III., which lies north of the Humber.*



PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MRS. J. WILLIAM WALLACK.

WITH Europe victor o'er the braggart Czar,
With wars and rumours echoing from afar,
Our happy England, long intent on peace,
Improves the arts she won from Rome and Greece.
There, in old time the drama held high state—
And here to-night claims audience not less great.
The Muse's temple to our hopes restored,
Freshly adorned, doth entrance new afford,
Re-opes its gates, and cheerful welcome gives
To all who joy to know—the drama lives:
A race as fair as free, as brave as good,
Derived from Heaven's best house, of earth's best blood,
Whose minds by Shakspere nursed, by Milton taught,
Know well to weigh the worth of wit and thought.
To you, who speak the language that they wrote,
We shew their works, with some of later note,
And thus, appealing to your better taste,
Ask that no more the stage may be disgraced

PROLOGUE.

By vulgar themes that souls refined detest,
And seek your favour only for the best.
Thus would we still the art of acting raise,
And challenge only where we merit praise.
If you approve, and recompense our aim,
We'll win for theatres their ancient name ;
But if our efforts no response receive,
Not ours the fault, if "the judicious grieve."
With comic grace, or tragic force, be ours
The task to please and move the spirit's powers ;
To you the laughter and the tears pertain,
That prove our task has not been plied in vain.
While proud Pauline, or Julia errs to mend,
And the true wife finds in her lord her friend ;
While for her sire the daughter all resigns,
Or Arden's forest bears Orlando's lines,
Or Love, in Knowles' fair countess, stoops to rise,
Or Otway's heroine maddens ere she dies,
Or Scotland's thane ambition's promptings sway,
Or Portia walks in duty's safer way,
Or Imogen rests in her husband's truth,
Or Juliet perishes in passion's youth,
Or Ion sacrifices life and love,
That he from Argos may the curse remove :
While scenes like these, by masters painted well,
Pass, pageant-like, each with its mighty spell—
Resist not *you* the charm, because too strong,
Nor pine for dalliance with an idler song,
But mindful still of Britain's bardic fame,
Let your hearts kindle with the muses' flame,
Whence, purified or cheered by either mood,
By melancholy or by mirth subdued,

PROLOGUE.

Attending “ thoughts that breathe and words that burn ; ”
When falls the curtain, and you home return,
Then may reflection show that this our stage,
If wisely used, tends to reform the age,
Softens the heart and elevates the mind,
Chastens the stubborn, makes the kind more kind,
The virtuous still more virtuous, fair more fair,
Imbuing still the common with the rare,
Till all, with the poetic spirit rife,
Exhibit beauty in their daily life.

To-night a theme, well prized in days of yore
By bard and statesman, skilled in elfin lore,
From the choice legends of our native land,
Treasures pathetic, terrible and grand,
We have evoked—and lo, it now appears,
Awaked from the long sleep of buried years—
A “ Briton monument”—whose student reads
Our soil the fæerie’s own—our heroes’ deeds
Those of the mighty, dauntless in their will ;
“ Argument worthy of Mæonian quill ”—
So call’d by SPENSER ; and by MILTON told,
That poets by their art might more unfold
In after-times, and grace these stories rude
With fancies rich, out of their gratitude.
So SHAKSPERE thought ; and, lo, upon the stage
Paternal *Lear*, the monarch-type of age,
Uprose sublime, and won the tragic crown
From Greek and Roman brows, to deck his poet’s own.
By his example fired, and with like spells,
We too requicken from dead chronicles

PROLOGUE.

A tale of wonder and of terror—such
As may even yet those deeper feelings touch
By which we recognise such truths as aim
At all we must believe and cannot name—
But which, once smitten, link the earth and sky
In one full song, one solemn symphony,
And shew each heart it may no secret hide
From him whose soul the muse has deified.

Such is the drama's aim ; such our's. The bell !
[*Bell rings.*
The Play will soon begin. Till then, farewell.

V I D E N A.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A SMITHY OUTSIDE A PALACE.

A SMITH discovered, standing, meditatively, beside his anvil, with his hand on the hammer. During the following conversation he retires into his forge, and brings thence a golden crown, which he proceeds to burnish diligently.

Enter PORREO and ENYON.

PORREO. My brother, the prince Ferrex, gave to the page, Philander—is that his name?

ENYON. So they call him.

PORREO. You saw. Mind that!

ENYON. Doubt not. I saw it—with my proper eyes.

PORREO. Nay—smile not! You saw my brother, the prince Ferrex, give to the page Philander a fair letter, charging the boy solicitously to convey it to the hand of my betrothed Marcella?

ENYON. The politic Dunwarro's daughter—

PORREO. Fiery ångers! hide in the heart!

ENYON. So be it. Let me state the argument.

PORREO. Proceed.

ENYON. Thou art the second son of Gorbudoc, the potent monarch of this our valiant isle of Britain. For a slight blemish of nature, which, in his royal esteem, misfitted a polished court like this of Trinovant, the prudent monarch consigned thee to the care of the wise and vene-

rable Clotyn, Duke of Cornwall, in whose far-removed halls thou wert instructed, till the defect which banished thee was (though unknown by thy distant father) happily in great part mended.

PORREO. Be quick.

ENYON. Meanwhile, Dunwarro, son of Clotyn, being widowed, and desiring business to supplant a lonely sorrow, seeks here the court of Gorbudoc, leaving old Clotyn's, but still entrusting his daughter, during his own absence, to the guardianship of her grandsire. Thou and she thus grow and are taught together, until affection ripens. Suddenly, Dunwarro commands his daughter hither. What follows?

PORREO. This! My presumptuous brother takes on him, moved by Marcella's report of my proficiency, to call our royal father to account for my banishment. Couriers are sent to all the different counties and provinces of Britain—one reaches Clotyn's court, demanding of the too-old duke to take his share in judging the matter. The sage duke consents to send his image—despatches the courier, and then, secretly disguising me as a herald, cunningly appoints me his missive.

ENYON. Wherein his motive is right evident. But touching thy brother's and *her* father's motives—(plague on this state craft!)—room there is for much suspicion.

SMITH (*singing*). Said the King to the Smith—

PORREO. Hark! We are disturbed.

ENYON. Let us retire to the grove yonder. Here they are to pass. [Exeunt.

SMITH (*sings*). Said the King to the Smith—

“Man, thy limbs lack no pith;”

Said the Smith to the King,

“Sir, these thewes are the thing.”

But the King answer'd straight,
“Tis the head saves the state;

But old Iron's out of date,
Match me Gold for my pate.

Here is gold. Make a Crown,
Worthy Royalty's frown."
Said the Smith—"Then, I fear,
That the metal's too dear,
Or to weld or to wear."

During the above, enter DORDAN, unperceived.

DORDAN (*in a feigned voice*). That is a good song.
Who made it, smith?

SMITH. Why, Dordan,
The jester of the court.

DORDAN. That fellow is
A poet.

SMITH (*looking up*). Why, it is thyself. O Dordan!
The work is almost done.

DORDAN. What dost thou, smith?
What's left to do?

SMITH. Please your wise mirth, the burnish
That finishes the golden diadem,
And makes it ready for the consecration,
Which the impatient King is hastening on;
And has even now sent to me that pert page
(Philander I do think they call the boy),
With message to prepare myself and it
For the procession soon.

DORDAN. Thine old trade, smith,
Was better than thy new one.

SMITH. May that be?

DORDAN. It wrought the richer metal!

SMITH. How is that?

DORDAN. Your iron is a richer prize than gold.
Gold will not plough a field, nor dig a mine,
Nor point a lance, nor make the battle sword;

But iron will. 'Twill get what is worth more
Than gold ; since gladly men give gold for grain,
And win the gold itself from cave and coffer.

SMITH. True, jester. 'Faith, I like not this new
business—

Not I, for my part—niggling, peddling work !
A sturdy stroke on a good iron anvil,
With a sledge hammer, that is what likes me :
A thump like this.

[*Striking the anvil with a hammer loudly.*

DORDAN. Have mercy on my ears !

SMITH. Thy ears ! they have no taste for music then.

DORDAN. *Have ?* they have nothing—therefore, they
have all. . .

SMITH. A perilous paradox.

DORDAN. He who has least

Is richest—that is, richest of the poorest ;
For who has nought he is the only rich,
Rich in the way of excellence, truly rich.
Rich absolutely, infinitely rich.

SMITH. Resolve me this.

DORDAN. If he live on without
Your gold, your silver, and your precious stones,
Your sumptuous dresses and your royal feasts,
And want them not, content with what he is ;
Then in himself is he a man so rich,
He can afford to do without their aid.
Or if his nature he extenuate,
So that he die, he shows a mine of wealth
That hath no need of any worldly thing,
Not even the body that he cared not for,
And left in scorn to who would bury it !

SMITH. Why, he, methinks, were greater fool than thou.

DORDAN. Not greater, smith ! but fool almost as wise !

SMITH. Well ! So thou thinkst the King himself is
poorer,

Now that he hath this crown, than ere he had it?

DORDAN. Yes; for he hath two crowns, and will give away,

For gold, the iron.

SMITH. See, Philander comes.

Enter PHILANDER.

DORDAN. Boy!

PHILANDER. Fool!

DORDAN. Fool!

PHILANDEE. I?

DORDAN. A boy's a fool.

PHILANDEE. As how?

DORDAN. Thy question shows it: he who asks a question Shows ignorance of what he asks about, And he who's ignorant is but a fool.

PHILANDEE. Yet, if by asking he can answer gain, 'Twas wise in him to ask that he might know, And knowledge make him wise.

DORDAN. 'Tis nature's wisdom, Not thine—and mightiest in the weakest. Women And children both are curious, both be fools.

PHILANDEE. What both?

DORDAN. Both; yet is nature wise in them.

PHILANDEE. Then nature's wise in me?

DORDAN. Yes, pretty child.

PHILANDEE. Child!

DORDAN. Scorn it not. 'Tis a great thing That manhood seldom matches. Childhood's faith Believes in all responses, and hence learns— And, confident, proceeds to seek again, By wonder, and the passion for the new, Still urged—still satisfied! But manhood chills The fount of admiration—ties itself Within the bands of custom, and deceived Or else deceiving, lives to doubt of all things; Nor will be taught, though it too little knows.

PHILANDER. Why, then, the child's the wiser. Fool!
thou'rt caught—

Hadst thou been curious as a boy must be,
According to thy pretty theorie,
My business here thou wouldest have questioned me.

[*Rhyming.*]

DORDAN. I guess. The sage Dunwarro and his daughter,
'Tis known, are passing soon. Thou hast a letter
From princely Ferrex to the fair Marcella.

PHILANDER. They come. How shall I now, in secret wise,
Commend this scroll to her sweet hands and eyes?

DORDAN. How the knave rhymes! The fool shall stand
thy friend.

Enter DUNWARRO and MARCELLA.

DORDAN. Hail to thy wisdom!

DUNWARRO. To thy folly, greeting!

So now make way.

DORDAN. Thy pardon, sir; but fools
Can ne'er make way; they always lag behind-hand.

DUNWARRO. What wouldest thou, fool?

DORDAN. Know why thou callst me fool.
I know why thou art called the wise.

DUNWARRO. Then mayst thou
Why thou art called the simple.

DORDAN. Marry, may I?
Then I'll resolve the point, though it be knotty.

[*During the following conversation, PHILANDER delivers the letter to MARCELLA, which she reads. ENYON enters, and observes the action, but immediately, making a threatening gesture, retires.*]

DUNWARRO. Thou art tedious.

DORDAN. I'll be brief. I am simple, sir,
Being natural. They call a fool a natural,
And therefore call me simple. 'Tis my simplicity
That makes me love the fields, the trees, the brooks,

The flowers, the rainbow, and the moon and stars ;
Think they are something ; trust both man and woman,
My fortune and the gods !

DUNWARRO. The fool's a poet.

DORDAN. The poet is a fool : for while he lives
On the ideal, as on air the lizard ;
He leaves to grave Dunwarro, with bent brow,
To frown mankind to silence, lest they lie
When they do speak ; to walk through wondering ranks
Cloaked in stern pride, apt to dispute all truth,
Decide all controversy, and despise
Instruction, pleasure, and whatever breathes
Of purer being ; yes, to you he leaves
The world ye are sure of, for the heaven ye seek not.

DUNWARRO. Be witty, and not moral.

DORDAN. How ! not moral ?
Witty, not moral ? why, your moralist 's
Your only genuine fool. Smith ! thinkst thou not
'Tis evil in thee, being a peaceful man,
To mould the tools of death ?

SMITH. Why, what know I
More than the miner who the metal delved ?
We work in our vocation.

DUNWARRO. Silence, sirrah !
Divest thee of that coxcomb ! Vex no more
The nicer manners of our modern times
With antics coarse and stale. We need them not.

DORDAN. Most gladly I submit ; hoping the state
Hath now no office which a fool doth hold.

DUNWARRO. Begone.

DORDAN. Philander, come. The time's unfit—
Meet is both knave and fool the statesman quit.

[*Exeunt PHILANDER and DORDAN.*

DUNWARRO. Smith ! for the anvil and the furnace ! In—
In, to the labour which I set thee now.

[*Exeunt SMITH, DUNWARRO, and MARCELLA.*

Re-enter ENYON and PORREO.

ENYON. What we have seen confirms it!

PORREO. Yes; the letter

Prince Ferrex gave the boy, he gave to her.

ENYON. Prince Ferrex wished thee home to mock thy wildness.

They're leagued to wrong thee: from thy birth they've wronged thee,

A monarch's banished son. By what right wert thou, Though rude of mien and slow of tongue, despatched, An alien, into Cornwall? Now, returned,

Behold Marcella, by thy elder brother,

Won from thy vows. The fraud is flagrant, burns With shameful glory, glows and glares with horror!

It was from *her* he heard of Porreo's change, But little still he knew the graceful herald,

From Clotyn's halls, was Porreo's self. This sleight I counselled; and another let me prompt.

Come! thou must doff this garb, and show again Like a King's son. Time presses. I'll instruct thee.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—STATE HALL, WITH THRONES AND COUNCIL-SEATS.

Enter DUNWARRO and MARCELLA.

DUNWARRO. Marcella!

MARCELLA. Father!

DUNWARRO. What is it thou hidest?

MARCELLA. Nothing; at least 'tis nothing I would hide.

DUNWARRO. What is it then?

MARCELLA. A letter from Prince Ferrex.

A noble youth that for his brother hath

Made noble stand, though 'gainst his kingly father.

DUNWARRO. Marcella ; 'tis for children to submit.
Thou lovest Porreo, and Prince Ferrex thee ;
These motives prompt him ; hence he takes the cause
That is his brother's.

MARCELLA. Nay—the purest, father.
He leaves me to my liking ;—smit by virtue,
He swears to do no wrong, nor see it done.
Hence with the King he deems it meet to plead
That he remove the cloud which banishes
His younger brother from the capital,
Civility, and learning, and the court.

DUNWARRO. The Council soon assembles. Better I
Were pleased, had weightier matter formed the theme
Of argument to-day. A state so rude
As is our Britain should postpone all private
To public needs. We yet lack laws to rule us ;
Temples and cities and the ways to them
Cry loud for privilege of sanctuary ;
And to the plough that turns the earth to profit
Like honour I would grant. Need, too, there is
Riddance of thieves and robbers were secured,
That peaceful men pass to and fro with safety.

MARCELLA. The Prince approaches.
DUNWARRO. And with Hermon too,
His friend. I will but place thee in the gallery
Of the court, where thou mayst hear this trial, daughter—
Then make me ready for an actor in it. [Exeunt.

Enter FERREX and HERMON.

FERREX. 'Tis she ! I must not follow !
HERMON. Wherefore, Prince ?
FERREX. I may not trust my fortitude of mind,
Nor rush into temptation. Man's resolve,
In presence of her beauty, melts to passion,
And the brave heart dissolves the frosty chains
Wherein it has been bound.

HERMON. Thou hast resigned her !

FERREX. I have performed a painful duty—but
The thing that's right, why 'tis the thing that's right.

HERMON. But not the most expedient. Thy brother
Porreo,

Thou wouldest recall to court; not knowing how
His presence might divide a father's love,
Leaving thee half of what thou hast now the whole—
If that the half be left thee, since, in this,
Thine opposition to a parent's will
May wake his wrath.

FERREX. I fear not, cautious Hermon!
The right is the expedient. There be gods
Who recompense man's deeds. Jove governs not
So laxly his great empire, that the good
Should go without reward.

HERMON. But how know we,
That what seems good to us is so to them?
And, verily—

FERREX. Nay, verily—I've weighed
All fairly in the scales; and, to be frank,
Feel reason to expect some gain will fall
To my partaking, for the generous purpose
That holds so even nature's mystic balance,
Not even Dunwarro can assign the motive
That's heavier of the twain!

Enter EUBULUS.

Good secretary—
Meet soon the Council?

EUBULUS. Prince, I come to tell thee,
The princes have arrived who should compose it.
There is Staterius, Duke of Albany,
There's Imner, Duke of Loegris, and Rudaucus,
The Duke of Cambria. But Clotyn of Cornwall
Sends word he is too old; nor can his presence
Be needed, since his son, Dunwarro, here,
Can represent him aptly; and besides,

From long acquaintance with his court, hath skill
Transcends his sire's, in local statesmanship.

FERREX. Dunwarro? Yes! 'Twas he advised that
Porreo

Should to the Duke of Cornwall be despatched,
So nature's error in his realm remote
Might find a veil that polished Trinevant
Refused to furnish. But behold! the King,
My honoured father, with his court and Council.

[Flourish. Enter ALBANY, LOGBRIS, and CAMBRIA, in attendance on the QUEEN (VIDENA) and the KING (GORBUDOC). DUNWARRO follows behind. The KING and VIDENA ascend the throne, and the Court is arranged on each side of the stage. FERREX, in the centre, kneels at a distance before the KING.]

KING. Princes, whom Heaven has given to me and mine,

For pillars that support the policy
Of Britain, like a temple;—list ye now
To what my son—my first-born and the virtue
Who, when I die, this sceptre well shall wield,
My successor in this improving state—
Hath to propound unto your grave decisions.

CAMBRIA. O King! I speak for all—that our knit souls
Are lieges to the motions of thine own,
And echo the dread oracle they serve.

KING. Now, princely Ferrex, to this solemn court
Reveal what suit thou hast unto ourself.

FERREX. O royal father! pardon let me crave
That not to thee alone, but, in this Council,
I dared appeal. Not that I feared the truth,
But that thou wert a party to the cause,
And wouldest, I knew, in such fair wise acquit

rable Clotyn, Duke of Cornwall, in whose far-removed halls thou wert instructed, till the defect which banished thee was (though unknown by thy distant father) happily in great part mended.

PORREO. Be quick.

ENYON. Meanwhile, Dunwarro, son of Clotyn, being widowed, and desiring business to supplant a lonely sorrow, seeks here the court of Gorbudoc, leaving old Clotyn's, but still entrusting his daughter, during his own absence, to the guardianship of her grandsire. Thou and she thus grow and are taught together, until affection ripens. Suddenly, Dunwarro commands his daughter hither. What follows?

PORREO. This! My presumptuous brother takes on him, moved by Marcella's report of my proficiency, to call our royal father to account for my banishment. Couriers are sent to all the different counties and provinces of Britain—one reaches Clotyn's court, demanding of the too-old duke to take his share in judging the matter. The sage duke consents to send his image—despatches the courier, and then, secretly disguising me as a herald, cunningly appoints me his missive.

ENYON. Wherein his motive is right evident. But touching thy brother's and *her* father's motives—(plague on this state craft!)—room there is for much suspicion.

SMITH (*singing*). Said the King to the Smith—

PORREO. Hark! We are disturbed.

ENYON. Let us retire to the grove yonder. Here they are to pass. [Exeunt.

SMITH (*sings*). Said the King to the Smith—

“Man, thy limbs lack no pith;”

Said the Smith to the King,

“Sir, these thewes are the thing.”

But the King answer'd straight,

“'Tis the head saves the state;

But old Iron's out of date,
Match me Gold for my pate.

Here is gold. Make a Crown,
Worthy Royalty's frown."
Said the Smith—"Then, I fear,
That the metal's too dear,
Or to weld or to wear."

During the above, enter DORDAN, unperceived.

DORDAN (*in a feigned voice*). That is a good song.
Who made it, smith ?

SMITH. Why, Dordan,
The jester of the court.

DORDAN. That fellow is
A poet.

SMITH (*looking up*). Why, it is thyself. O Dordan !
The work is almost done.

DORDAN. What dost thou, smith ?
What's left to do ?

SMITH. Please your wise mirth, the burnish
That finishes the golden diadem,
And makes it ready for the consecration,
Which the impatient King is hastening on ;
And has even now sent to me that pert page
(Philander I do think they call the boy),
With message to prepare myself and it
For the procession soon.

DORDAN. Thine old trade, smith,
Was better than thy new one.

SMITH. May that be ?

DORDAN. It wrought the richer metal !

SMITH. How is that ?

DORDAN. Your iron is a richer prize than gold.
Gold will not plough a field, nor dig a mine,
Nor point a lance, nor make the battle sword ;

Banished so long—yet—yet—I know, I feel,
Thou art my son !

PORREO. I am thy son, O Queen !
Thine am I too, dread King ! and would approve it
In my obedience ever !

FERREX. Thy coming's apt,
And thy bold presence better pleads for thee
Than all the words I've used ; and yet, methinks,
Less violent propulsion might have served
Thy need with me, than the close poniard's point
At the warm heart was pleading thy behoof.

PORREO. Less thine ; who mightest to a father's ear
Have privately enforced it ; nor even so
Until my wish was known to have it so.

FERREX. If it were not, the missive from the Duke
Might have conveyed thy wish ; and thereupon
I had withdrawn my suit.

PORREO. Myself am he—
For when my royal father's couriers came
To Clotyn with his mandate for this Council—
I prayed him to send me, that I might set
Great Gorbudoc at large from this impeachment,
And vindicate his wisdom.

[VIDENA regards PORREO with marked suspicion.]

KING (descending from his throne). Hither ! hither !
Porreo ! my son ! rebuke thy brother not !
Paternal deities ! your pardon now,
That I have Porreo wronged !

[ENYON, on a signal from PORREO, here exit.]

PORREO. Thou hast not wronged him !
In Cornwall's court I found a foster-god,
Who reared another pupil for thy service,
Though hard the task with one so rude as Porreo.

KING. So rude ? so civil ! this is passing strange—
Pride now is glad in thee, my princely son !
—Now, Ferrex ! I will bid thy generous heart

Leap up with joy at the amends I'll make,
Worthy a king, in error who has injured.
Half my dominion I decree to him
North of the Humber—to thyself all south.
Well may ye reign, and spare me further toil,
Who both have shown, as brother and as son,
Such duteous love. In you may peace confide,
Between you the sweet charities commune!

[FERREX, as if stunned, stands in deep thought.

VIDENA. With more than a queen's welcome, princely
Porreo!

With all a mother's passion, I receive thee—
My son! my son!—Yet while I am glad, I grieve
That he, thy brother, who thy coming furthered,
Should for *his* virtue lose what *thine* has gained.

KING. Nay—'tis ill thought, Videna! trust me, 'tis!
The generous Ferrex deems it not a loss,
But in his brother's gain rejoices so,
His half is double all. I know him well!
Come, Ferrex! come—thy brother's hand in thine!

PORREO. Brother! I thank thee, now the cause is passed,
And claim thy mercy for my violent humour.
But 'tis our Cornish fashion—so I thank thee!

FERREX. And I no churlish welcome give to thee,
Beshrew me if I might. Nor know I now
What is my due, or praise or blame, for deed
Which, if fraternal, was unfilial—
But, an' events interpret Heaven aright,
I fear me, censure only.

VIDENA. No, my son!
I read it, as its sybil, and pronounce
That herein it would teach us, virtue looks
To it alone for guerdon, or herself
Hath in herself all the reward she can.

KING. A true conclusion. Let the court break up—
And, after feasting in acknowledgment

Of this great bounty, we will nothing lack
That may our purpose seal right speedily. [Exeunt.]

As PORREO is following, enter MARCELLA.

MARCELLA. Stay! 'tis Marcella sues!

PORREO. Marcella!

MARCELLA. Porreo!

PORREO. Rejoice, Marcella! thou shalt be a queen.

MARCELLA. Only in rightful sway can I rejoice.

PORREO. Is that not right a royal sire bestows?

MARCELLA. Not on a younger son, while lives the elder;
More wrongful, if his life be good and gracious.

PORREO. By heaven! thou lovest him!

MARCELLA. I love him, Porreo,

As thou shouldst love him—as his brethren should!

PORREO. No more? You're sure of it? It may be so,
Often small sign denotes great cause. At eve,
Look cross the sea, a narrow rim of light,
Along the horizon's edge, implies the moon
Hid somewhere in a cloud.

MARCELLA. What hide thy words?

PORREO. Cursed be the hour you left your grandsire's
court!

MARCELLA. Thrice bless'd, since thus new virtue I have
witnessed!

PORREO. And I wild ocean from the pensive shore
Have watched, with eyes of one who seeks a wreck!
I felt, when thou wert gone, my vagrant heart
Was as a vessel which had lost its pilot,
And might not weather anger. First time, then,
I thought with pity on the storm-tost man,
Driven to that coast for shelter. Well I knew,
In haunts more polished thou wouldest scorn rude Porreo!

MARCELLA. Thou doubtest as thou doatest, still too
fiercely.

Now hear a soothing tale. Prince Ferrex loved me—

PORREO. I guessed as much—

MARCELLA. Thou never lovedst me !

PORREO. I ?

MARCELLA. Then thou wouldest hear me !

PORREO. Hear thee, false one ? Speak !

Speak !

MARCELLA. Yes—with tears—and do thou listen gently. Ignorant how I was in thy heart enshrined, He saw and loved me. Then I told him all : How worthy thou—how, by my grandsire's skill, Accomplished in the arts thy nature shunned— Then he resolved to right thee ; then, with pangs That tried his nature sorely, to thy claim Resigned the maid he wooed.

PORREO. *Ignorant I loved thee ?*
He deemed me all too rude to prize such beauty !
Insolent ignorance ! *The maid he wooed !*
And might have won—but for—I'll prate no more !
Absent, I have never known him as a brother ;
Present, what motives me to know him now ? [Exit.

MARCELLA. I gasp—I cannot breathe—the horror darkens
On my strong fancy's eye. Do I not know
The Cornish nature well ? Inspire me, Heaven,
With swift prevention ! Ha ! Right welcome, page

Enter PHILANDER.

PHILANDER. They are at high festal there ! The brethren, lady,
Twin-kings, are at the banquet.

MARCELLA. I remember—
It peereth from the blank that came upon me !

PHILANDER. Sweet lady, art thou ill ?

MARCELLA. Philander, no—
'Tis there, like an imagination shown
In some reflecting clearness ; such a shadow
As oft pervades the waters ; a strange dream
Mirrored within the visionary mind !

Philander, no. Nay, I am very well,
My pretty page. But I should list, unseen,
To see the banquet thou hast lauded—couldst
Stead me in this?

PHILANDER. My wit is dull.

MARCELLA. Thus grave?

PHILANDER. Why not? my soft Minerva! Know ye not
Your ladyship's father makes it now the fashion?
Dunwarro sets the style—and the poor wit
Is needed less than ever now at court.
Gross manners are reformed, and the Old Fool
Is growing obsolete with the Old King,
Who, that he may seem young, becomes the new one!

MARCELLA. Aye reverently speak of royalty.

PHILANDER. Royalty! that parts with an iron crown,
When one of gold's a-making?

MARCELLA (*abstractedly*). One of gold?

PHILANDER (*surprised*). Your ladyship's memory grows
like Dordan's folly,

From sympathy—

MARCELLA. How's that?

PHILANDER. Into disuse.

I mean, my lady, that great gift of gold
Duke Clotyn sent with thee from Cornwall hither,
To grace thy presentation at our court.
My Lord Dunwarro counselled straight the king
To have it moulded to a modern crown,
Would better grace his brows than one of iron—
The which to see, thyself this morn did visit
The honest smith, while labouring at his task,
Making it ready for its consecration.

MARCELLA. That treasure cast by shipwreck on our
coast?

Strange, I forgot it; but now, just now—I
Can think of nothing that has been, intent
On what is, or to be.

PHILANDER. Of course ; the past,
In these reforming times, is the forgotten,
And the new wisdom puts back the old folly.

MARCELLA. Not so, pert boy ! I need it even now.

PHILANDER. 'Tis at thy service ere the asking.

MARCELLA. Come, then,
Philander, thou wilt stead me ?

PHILANDER. Marty, will I !

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A BANQUET HALL.

KING, VIDENA, DUNWARRO, FERREX, PORREO, with the several DUKES, DOREDAN, and others, discovered seated.

KING. This crown having between you parted, sons,
Jove grant ye wear it well!

DORDAN. That wit were well,
Methinks, that could demonstrate, mathematically,
How two heads might, at once and in two places,
Sport the same cap.

DUNWARRO. Please now, your majesty,
Were it not seemly at this solemn tide,
A licence, by late manners ill permitted,
As my poor judgment goes, were mute for once?

KING. Dordan, we need not thee. Go forth!

[*Exit DORDAN with a dejected air.*

Yet apt it was
What he propounded—but herein have we
Provision made. To Porreo we can lend
This iron crown; while, Ferrex, for thy brow
The golden round preparing we reserve,
As to the elder due.

VIDENA. My royal Lord—
'Twere ominous to superstitious mind,
The younger should to full possession come,
While the duped elder, for his unreft half,
Should hold it only in reversion still.

KING. Fair Queen,—why, with a mind foretelling evil,
Division make where peace makes one of twain?

PORREO. Mother—misdoubt me not.
 Nor need I care my brother now were crowned;
 Waiting would gain my brows the richer show.
 Pledge me, good brother; give me of thy cup,
 And take thou mine. Thus, to the bottom, I
 Drink to thy health, in love for thee as true
 As thine for me.

FERREX. My love for thee has been
 In no faint show avouched—nor am I slack
 To meet thy pledge. Thus, then—

[As he is about to drink, MARCELLA enters, and taking the cup from his hand, pours forth its contents on the ground.]

MARCELLA. Pernicious draught!
 Sink to the centre! Shudder not, O earth!
 As deep into thy veins the venom filters! *[All rise.]*

PORREO. Confusion!

FERREX. Fair Marcella! wherefore this?

MARCELLA (pointing to PORREO). Ask him!—If in his
 eye no conscience lingers,
 Then he is guiltless—

PORREO. Me? Why question me?
 What magic's round me? influence in the air
 To madden men and maids?

FERREX. I know not, Porreo,
 Whether assumed, or not, this wonder be;
 But take this maid with thee unto thy realm,
 As queen of thine estate, and part we now
 As brothers should.

MARCELLA. O, never, never!

PORREO. She says well—
 Never! Take her to thee who, with witch-charms,
 Hast snared a heart her choice had pledged to me!

KING. Gods! Whence has grown this strife? Retire,
 Marcella!

[DUNWARRO and MARCELLA withdraw up the stage.]

Are ye my sons? Am I your father, late
So happy in your loves? Which of you woos
Dunwarro's daughter?

FERREX. She is Porreo's bride!

POREEO. 'Tis false! She is thy mistress!

KING. Jupiter!

But I grow wroth! This jealousy doth lack
All basis for its standing. In my presence
The maid has walked, as if Diana's self;
And Ferrex' honour is a priceless gem!
Thy father is a witness for them both!
What! think'st thou that the court of Trinovant
Is as a Carthaginian cave, for sheltering
Impatient lovers in a thunder-storm?
Come—come! I see the manners of the coast
Blind thee to ours. We live not here, as they
Who couch among the rocks that barrier
The liberal tide of ocean. Thou must learn
To know us better, Porreo! Nor think, now,
I chide thee. 'Twas my fault that suffered thee
To grow up far away from our acquaintance,
Which soon will give thee cause to mend opinion
Too suddenly conceived.

POREEO. I do begin
To see my error. I confess my failing.
But I'm of hasty mood, and must be doing.
Would I were north o' the Humber! Business there
Would drive these fancies from me!

KING. Heaven speed thee!
We doubt it nothing. Now, Videna, come—
Our state shall pass from toil and travail free,
Of royal care unrobed . . . a fiery vest,
Such as besieged Alcides with hot pains—
These we are quit of!

VIDENA. May the gods forfend,
That seeking peace too soon, we haste not on the end

[*Exeunt all.*

SCENE II.—GROVE NEAR THE PALACE.

Enter DUNWAREO and MARCELLA.

DUNWAREO. Thy father's prudence I perceive in thee,
Who of a doubt a certainty hast made,
At least on safety's side.

MARCELLA. The sacrifice!
To me Prince Porreo now is lost for ever!
He'll not forgive what I could not omit!

DUNWAREO. Hercin thou shouldst have sought my
counsel first,
Who warned thee against loving, though not much,
Not dreading much his influence, form or manners—
But time has bettered . . .

MARCELLA. No—my grandsire's skill—
Nor took I slender care to woo him on
To gentler arts.

DUNWAREO. Marcella! my sweet daughter!
How like thy blessed mother, when she lived—
A flower that made elysium of the earth—
Soon lost to me, my child! What could I do,
But leave thee, an infant to thy grandam's care,
While here at Britain's court I shook off grief,
In chasing fortune? Ah! how oft the love
Of this world's power or goods is but a mock,
Hiding the countenance of that other world—
A world of holy sighs, of secret tears,
And thoughts whose consecration is a veil
More sacred than a vestal's.
How now, Philander?

Enter PHILANDEE.

PHILANDEE. The queen would see Marcella.

DUNWAREO. She shall come. [Exit PHILANDER.
Marcella! to thy duty. I'll to mine.

[*Exeunt at different sides.*

SCENE III.—A CHAMBER IN THE PALACE; AT THE
BACK A SPLENDID CURTAINED ARCHWAY.

VIDENA and FEEBEX *discovered*.

VIDENA (*walking up and down, much agitated*). By the
adorèd sanctity of Justice!

I swear *thy* father hath much wronged *my* son—
My eldest born!—My indignation boils
Within me, though repressed!—Wronged *thee*, for whom?
My son, I grant him too. Methought I loved him,
When first he stood before me. Can I now?
Tell me, great gods!—*was* poison in the cup?

FEEBEX. Marcella knew not; 'twas suspicion only.

VIDENA. In *her* suspicion, jealousy in *him*;
A cursèd bridal, were they wed together!

Enter MARCELLA suddenly, and kneel to VIDENA.

MARCELLA. Pardon, dear lady—beauteous majesty!
The innocent cause of strife 'twixt princely brethren,
I prostrate at thy feet this worthless form.

FEEBEX. Up, from the ground, thou maiden paragon!

VIDENA. That strain no more.—She is thy brother's
vow!

His jealousy at least must have no cause;
As little thy suspicion, fair Marcella.

MARCELLA. Stern as he is, my heart is yet his own.

VIDENA. I trust it is;—else were my younger son
Wronged all as much by thee, as by his father
My elder is. Justice supreme be worshipt!
And I will prove if he be child of mine
In soul as well as fleshly lineaments.

The project is prepared that shall essay him;—
(Thanks to the wit of Dordan, whom we know,
A better man than to the most he seems)—
If of my mind he be not the true son,

He shall be of my wrath ! If reason sway not,
Let passion rule!—rule thoroughly ! Half means,
Half ends, for fools ! I've sent for him. He's here.

[VIDENA and FERREX retire up the stage.

Enter PORREO.

MARCELLA (*rushing to him*). Speak not a word until
thou list to me !

What have I done, that thou shouldst spurn me thus ?
What crime have I committed ?

PORREO. Crime ?—what, thou ?
Thou'rt innocent ! too innocent ! I'm sad
At heart, Marcella !

MARCELLA. Thou art calm again.
PORREO. Calm as the sea, reposing from the blast
It loves, as I love thee—to war and death !
But these rough moods suit not their courtly manners ;
And I thank much the instinct guided thee
To spare me groundless vengeance. I believe
My royal father's word, that thou art pure !

MARCELLA. Pure ?—was there then—
PORREO (*interrupting her*). My royal mother sent
For me to attend her hither, ere I parted.

VIDENA (*coming forward with dignity*). And now awaits
the homage of thy knee.

PORREO. Thou, and my brother?—spies upon my wooing ?
Spies on the unguarded utterance of my heart ?

VIDENA. Low-thoughted man, who knowst Videna not—
Incapable of aught may honour stain ;
She lives in ether thou hast never breathed.

PORREO. Thy pardon, lady ; I have not had the means
Of knowledge long.

VIDENA. Woe worth the truth thou speakest.
Yet no long knowledge, none indeed, was wanted ;
The guiltless bosom dreads no listener—
The guilty soul to think should even fear,
For the most secret gods our thoughts can hear.

PORREO. Now it comes back on me ; all that so late
 I had set free my soul from. Watched and springed,
 And she the engine. She, who snared my heart,
 Set by my brother and my mother on
 The scent. False, I do swear. False in her wish,
 If not in deed. 'Tis plain as these two hands—
 Hands, I have hands—nay, nor am I unweaponed.

[*Rushes frantically upon FERREX.*

Thy heart shall show me of what hue it is—
 I'll judge it by its blood.

VIDENA (*to FERREX*). My part is here ; not thine.
 (*To PORREO*) Nor this the greeting I did hope from thee,
 When I desired thy presence, in the faith
 That, to my reasons, I should find thee pliant ;
 A generous offspring like its parent stock.
 I now call on thee to forego advantage
 By chance obtained, and win her praise whose love
 Was born with thee ; and now, on thy return,
 Yearns to complete the circle long deferred.

FERREX. My royal mother, let him keep the half
 The realm my father has bestowed on him ;
 For if he give it back I needs must spurn it,
 Ungenerous to receive as to refuse—
 I feel that never more it can be mine.

PORREO. It shall not be.

MARCELLA. O Prince, believe Marcella.
 Richer wert thou to her, a stainless man,
 Than were the crowns of earth upon thy brow,
 With shame upon thy cheek.

PORREO. Poor should I be
 With all the crowns of earth and heaven to boot,
 Could false Marcella now be rich in me.

VIDENA. Hard man art thou to say it—fierce and cruel.
 Take her unto thy bosom, and confess
 Her love more worth than twenty thousand kingdoms.

PORREO. I will try one without it, please you, lady.

VIDENA. Pitiful scorner, to thy father's robe
I'll cling in menial supplication, till
He yield a right decree. Thou knowest him not.
His spirit, clear, heroic, and sublime,
Believes not in earth's evil, least of all
That aught of such could issue from his goodness—
Hence, thou art trusted, as he would a god,
Being himself a god, in all but fear,
Suspicion, and distrust. Think him not weak,
Or thou mistakest him. *That* to the carnal
Appears as weakness, which the moral knows
To be the strength of heaven.—Let it be proved
That thou art worthless—.

PORREO (*with sudden coolness*). Mother, I am warned—

VIDENA. Warned? (*Trumpets.*) Hark, he comes.

Enter KING, *in procession, with DUNWARRO, the DUKES, PHILANDER, and the COURT, also ENYON.*

KING. Here, Princes, they are found—
The Queen and her right-royal progeny.
We know that she had redde their presence here,
And have made bold to guard *King* Porreo forth
In honour. So, with valediction proud,
We shall pursue his steps, far as we may,
On the glad road that leads him to a throne.

VIDENA. That throne, great monarch, ne'er let Porreo
mount;

The king in office should be king in worth.

KING. What now, our queen?—why should dissention
be?

All quarrel hushed—all terms made free and plain—
Know we not that our eldest fairly grants
What we have gladly promised?

FERREX. Father-king,
Ill would it me beseem to stop thy bounty;
Worse ill to him, my brother. Be thy gift
Thy gift. I have no choice to say, Reclaim it.

KING. By bright Apollo, and it shall be so.
 The word of a true king is very truth,
 And as the truth immortal. Never mine
 Shall die, not even as dies in the soil the seed,
 But flower without corruption, deathless birth
 Consummate in conception, and at once
 Burst to a godlike life. Most just Videna,
 Grace our procession with thy port of pride.

VIDENA. Here will I stay; and here stay thee with me,—
 So long as thou wilt listen to the peal
 Of my loud speech, which I do wish were thunder,
 For Britain's sake, and thine.

KING. Thunder's not reason,
 But anger—and that's madness, or divine,
 Or human. Reason is the spirit of
 The soul, that speaks, with still small voice, the truths
 Too fine for mortal ear, yet audible—
 Mind lists that spherey music, and looks up,
 And sees the starry light, from which come down
 Its all but silent prophecies.

VIDENA. Not silent!
 The harmonies of reason listen now!
 Sound, music! [Music behind the scenes, and

SONG.

1. Ancestral memories, shine
 With light divine!
 There's joyance and might
 In the gleam of your light!

2. Our fathers! let their name
 Be their son's fame!
 Thought is throned on their brow—
 Man! behold! worship now!

[Curtains unfold—present an illuminated circle
 of statues, representing the Kings of BRUTUS'
 line.—1. BRUTUS, with a bow, having just sped

the shaft. 2. A group of three, LOCRINE, ALBANACT, and CAMBER. 3. LOCRINE, GUENDOLEN, ESTREILDA, and SABRINA. 4. MALIM, MEMPRICUS, and a Wolf. 5. EBRANO. 6. LIEL. 7. LEIR and his three daughters.]

VIDENA. Keep ye silence! All be mute!
 Look, Porreo, look, ere thou departest hence,
 Upon thy royal ancestry, thyself
 About to be a king! Of them whose blood
 Is in thy veins 'tis fit thou wisdom learn!
 Behold great Brutus, from old Troy renowned,
 The son of Sylvius—who, by error led,
 Came to this land, then savage Albion,
 And quelled the giants that its wild woods roamed :
 For his unwitting shaft had slain his Sire ;
 Wherefore, 'tis said, *his line shall one day end,*
When heavenly vengeance, for that hapless deed,
Shall finish, and the PARENT slay the SON—
 'Twas thence these toils he bore, that Fate might find
 Scope for its will, arena for its act.

PORREO. His story lacks, methinks, of good example.

VIDENA. Irreverent boy; religion contemplates
 The inmost soul, not the external bearing.
 He was the Founder of the state of Britain,
 Loved by his friends, and dreaded by his foes,
 Whose first misfortunes only made him greater,
 Gave him to wife Italian Imogene,
 Whose three fair sons thou seest. There Locrine,
 There Albanact, there Camber, who in peace
 Ruled o'er the land.

KING. Thus rule ye, O my sons;
 Coheirs of empire!

PORREO. Witness for me, Brutus.

KING. 'Tis fairly sworn.

VIDENA. Right valiant deeds were theirs,
 'Gainst Humber, Hunnish king, whose name still bears

The river wherein the invader sank. . .
 But ah, Estrilda, his fair captive, won
 On weak Locrine, though Guendolen's espoused,
 The great Corineus' daughter, he whom Brutus
 Found near the Tyrrhene sea; a Trojan famed,
 Who with Antenor entered Italy,
 Tamer of monsters, victor over giants;
 Of whom our legends a grand fable cherish,
 How, at a solemn feast beside the shore,
 Broke on the Britons' mirth a savage crew,
 Led by Goemagog, who, the rest conquered,
 Reserved for wrestle with Corineus,
 Seized, and aloft swung the brave chief, thus breaking
 Three of his ribs. But he, thereat enraged,
 Heaved the strong bulk, and bore him on his shoulders,
 Throwing him headlong shattered from a rock,
 Since Langoemagog, into the sea.

PORREO. A giant's leap, indeed. A worthy feat,
 Which still in Cornwall we do celebrate.
 O, that my foes were thus within my grasp,
 Thus bravely should they suffer my resentment.

VIDENA. Nay, nay, my son; take rather warning thou
 From Locrine's tale; on whom his Queen divorced
 Made justest war, wherein the King was slain,
 His leman and her daughter likewise drowned,
 Fair Sabra, in the Severn's thence-named stream;
 Hence fear thou to do wrong, albeit a King.
 Be ye like Madan—be ye most unlike
 Malim and bad Mempricius, fratricide,
 Whom wolves devoured. Look ye on Ebranc's form,
 And cities build like him. Look, too, upon
 The second Brutus, who redeemed the loss
 His father had in Gaul. Look, too, on Leil,
 Who peace enjoyed while he maintained the right,
 And fell to discord when he fell to wrong.
 Now, turn at once to Leir and his three daughters,

Of whom Cordelia well may claim your love;—
Think, Gorbudoc, of Leir.

KING. I think of him
Who did unwisely, trusting woman's word.
But Brutus, our renownèd ancestor,
Confiding in his sons, was justified.

POREEO. The lesson that my fathers read, I learn
With all humility. Men were they all,
Some weak, some strong.

VIDENA. Lost—lost is he who deems
His sires of old not gods. Removed from presence,
Their memories are divine; and, in our hearts,
The motives, too, that prompt us piously
To virtuous deeds, lest we dishonour them.

POREEO. Who sometimes yet, since opposites cannot
Be alike virtuous, oft themselves dishonoured.

VIDENA (*in agony*). O, ye great gods! lost, lost to piety,
With me is lost to hope. Burst not, my heart,
And, my big soul, restrain thee!

KING. Wrong him not,
Videna! Blind belief is witnessed null;
Discrimination is not evil doubt.

VIDENA (*rushing into the semicircle of the statues, and kneeling in the midst*).
O thou long line of sacred ancestry!
Ye royal fathers! Race of godlike Brutus!
Heroes and demigods! O pardon me,
That I call not the thunder down—but nature
Is strong in me for them in whose veins flows
The blood that was in yours! But well I note
The ominous anger on your clouded brows,
That he who lacks of reverence should divide
The crown that they have sanctioned!

[*Rises and comes forward.*

Thou, Marcella,
Plead with me.

KING. 'Tis too much! Marcella! Nay,
 Thy lover shall, despite thee, be a King,
 Were it only for thy sake, thou virtuous maid.
 Let him but reach his realm, and form his court,
 And feel him safe upon his local throne,
 Then claim the bridal, which, I promise him,
 Shall be most prompt and happy.

PORREO. To thy will,
 Most royal father, I submit myself,
 In everything obedient. Nor lacks aught,
 But that my mother's blessing on my knee
 I crave, ere hence I wend; for I would not
 Her state diminish so, that, for my sake,
 She now should tend on me, or show herself
 In chafèd mood abroad.

KING. 'Tis ill—'tis ill—
 Make clear thy queenly brow! I marvel one
 Who is, as 'twere, the Astrea to this orb,
 Should let her star be quenched in our rebuke.
 A waywardness most strange. But we are man;
 Whom woman rules is none. What, rebel still?
 Shame to thy state. An unsubmitting wife
 Makes disobedient children. This example's

[*VIDENA stands in a fixed statuesque attitude of offended indignation.*]

Of evil auspice. Come, bestow the boy
 His blessing.

PORREO. When my Queen and mother shall
 Have known me better, she will proffer that
 Which now she pauses o'er. I'll rise, great King,
 And win, ere long, by merit, such a blessing,
 That summer showers upon the thirsty land
 Shall be to earth but as the winter's snow
 Upon the ocean's foam. Mother, farewell!
 Farewell, my bride! till fate evolve the time
 For which my bosom pants. Brother!

FERREX. Thy way
I'll honour, Porreo, with our royal sire,
And his return defend.

KING. A duteous thought.
Let the loud trumpet blare—the train move on.

[*Flourish. Exeunt in procession omnes, except VIDENA and MARCELLA.*]

VIDENA (*gradually recovering*). He has gone forth without his mother's blessing.

MARCELLA. He has gone forth without his maiden's promise.

VIDENA. Motherless—lovelorn—have we let him go.
I could not find a blessing in my heart,
I could not bring a blessing to my lips.
There are no tears within my marble orbs,
There is no pulse within my bloodless veins;
Cold, cold, and still I stand. A wife's authority
Outmatch'd by a son's cunning. Pride, thou'rt shamed;
Matron prerogative, thou art disrobed;
Fool! 'twas my woman's babbling cautioned him—
Warned! was he warned? Warned—warned—

MARCELLA. O righteous queen!
See, in thy son, my lover. Frequent duty,
In me, shall render compensation full;
So, taking me for him, thou shalt not lack
Of reverence one mere jot. Nay, I will be
Thy path to tread on, soften it with tears;
The tresses of my hair—

VIDENA. Upbind thy tresses—
Thou art a foolish maid, whom I will love.
Let my hair fall, who am dishonoured;
Whose mother's pride is stung by her own brood.
—O most brave anger! To my chamber, in—
In—in—Marcella, ere the train return,
And see me weeping. I am still a Queen.

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—NORTH OF THE HUMBER—INTERIOR OF A PALACE.

Enter PORREO and ENYON.

PORREO. Thou art not his brother.

ENYON. No—nor am I thine;

Yet I am more—thy friend: and if aught, short
The being born of the same parents, makes
A brother, the communion of our lives
Might authorize fraternal fellowship.
The rugged soil we trod from boyhood up—
The savage moors, the granite tors, the streams
That, from the vapoury mines, the surface trench,
Hills, dales, and rivers, with the barrier rocks
That coast the ocean, like to palaces,
Arches of triumph, columns of old temples,
The abodes of sea-gods, nymphs, and demon-powers—
These witness to our loves. By stone and circle,
Whether of sport or sepulture, and both,
I swear, and, by their memories, attest
The honour of my faith. A brother, quotha?
Would I have won from thee, while thou wert absent,
Thy heart o' the world?

PORREO. Marcella! where art thou?

ENYON. In Ferrex' arms—on Ferrex' nuptial couch;
Glad of the distance 'twixt the south and north—
They *there*, and Porreo *here*—a wifeless king.
Where else should be Marcella, who loved once
His brother, and now him? Days, weeks, and months,
Have passed—no tidings yet.—

PORREO. Brother?—

ENYON. Why, yes.

'Tis witnessed oft, our kindred are worst foes—
They have looked so closely and often on our faults,
All from the purest kindness to correct them,
At length they see them only, and thence see nothing
But what they should, and do, most heartily hate.

PORREO. Ah, Enyon. We have not thus familiar been.

ENYON. Then it is instinct in him. Ye were born
To show how brothers can abhor each other.
It is the fate of both—a charmèd sea,
Which ye would sin against the gods to stem,
And, if ye dare, will drown you.

PORREO. Born such foes?

Videna's sons. Severe is she, not cruel.
Her tears might flow not—but her frowns would slay—

ENYON. Thee;—not thy brother. Is it not avouched
He hath her love, her tenderness, and thou,
The majesty thou protest of—the cold state—
The lip of scorn—the speech of apothegms.

PORREO. Thou understandst her not. Like her, am I,
In many things—my fierceness and my pride—
Softened, in her, to matron dignity—
Hardened, in me, to man's austerity,
That will not be denied.

ENYON. But love best loves
Dissimilars; and were it not so, justice,
Which thou hast said in her is paramount,
Votes for the eldest, and long household wont
Enforces equity, with sentiment
That preassures the verdict.

PORREO (*with deep emotion*). Out on it.
Alas! my feet are known not at their hearth;
My hands are strangers at their daily board.
There was no chamber set apart, no bed
For me was cherished in my father's house.
Evil grow on this evil.

ENYON. Muse on this—
 Partners, or rivals, now, in empire are ye ?
 Allies or powers opponent ? Can ye trust
 In one another ? Can ye live in peace ?
 Be sure, that he already mans himself
 'Gainst chance and peril, lest the half that's left
 Follow the half that's gone—

PORREO. Ha !—

ENYON. And, perchance,
 To win again the lost, which may be found
 If vigorous search be made, and time should serve
 The bridal of occasion, when the torch
 Of Hymen shall show light.

PORREO. It never shall.
 Never shall he deprive me of my love—
 I am resolved. Impetuous blood, boil on.
 Throb, my big heart. Impatient brain, work—work—
 And swell, my brows, to bursting agony.
 Arms he ? I'll arm. Occasion shall not wait—
 Marcella shall be mine. She shall be mine ;
 I'll put the *golden* crown upon her head,
 And make it all as glorious with her beauty,
 As with its own. Then shall I reign—reign—reign.

ENYON. Ay, now again I know thee.

PORREO. Dost thou, Enyon ?
 And thou shalt know me better. In my soul
 The sacred thirst of power hath appetite,
 Capacitated at once. 'Tis as a gorge
 In a ravine approached too suddenly—
 I start in fear and wonder—but not long—
 For *there* it is, and must be fed with horror.
 Surprise and death brood laughing o'er the gulf ;
 It yawns—it shall be satisfied—though it swallow
 Not my foes only, but myself. Come, death ;
 Come, hell and ruin ; let but vengeance come. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—OUTSIDE THE PALACE, *as in Scene I.*
Act. I.

Enter DORDAN and PHILANDER.

DORDAN. I'll play the fool no more.

PHILANDER. The fool has lost
His lady-love, and so would lose himself,—
Become a monument on Beauty's grave.
The smith, her father, made of sterner stuff,
Grieves not like thee.

DORDAN. He has a task—I've none.
Jove, when he gave to every mortal man
His occupation, left the poet idle,
That leisure might bring wisdom. Shall he sigh?
Grave muses win no largess. Shall he turn
The laughing sage, or look more grave than sage,
That they who be no sages may laugh more?
They think him that same fool they make themselves.
It boots not—thrifless boon.

PHILANDER. Methinks this jest
Is far too serious.

DORDAN. Pupil mine, it is
No jest.

PHILANDER. Not meant a jest?
DORDAN. No, by my troth.
What said I? That the smith, my maiden's sire,
Hath occupation, still denied to me?
Yea, honour also. Even to-day the King
Will consecrate the *golden crown* he made,
And now will bear aloft, partaker in
The proud solemnity. I may not share it;
Excluded, as profane, from the dread temple
Even of the god who made me what I am—
Divine Apollo. But they know me not;

Know not the man within, that he without
Doth hide.

PHILANDER. Nay, take not on so.

DORDAN. What, and if

They knew him, 'twould be still the same. Yes, if
The poet in his loftiest attributes
Appeared, in small regard would he be held.
Shut from the temple? A time comes, when the poet,
Free-born of soul, the zealot shall prohibit
A niche 't the national temple for his statue.
An evil day for both.

PHILANDER. Grief for thy maiden
Hath changed to sorrow for thyself alone.

DORDAN. One grief has taken both, myself and her.
From court excluded first, and now from sanctuary,
No business for me in the world is left.
This second grief is parcel of the first,
Which first slew her. Though lowly was my place,
Still 'twas a courtly office, and, poor girl,
She prided on the courtier in the jester,
And pined herself away in the disgrace
Of his dismissal, fading day by day,
Until no bloom was left upon her cheek,
And the pale rose was withered with the red.

PHILANDER. She died of melancholy—so wilt thou?

DORDAN. Nay, I have made me business. Seest thou
not

My travelling cloak is on? I've been a journeying—
I love my King, my country, and my God,
Howbeit neglected, or however wronged.
I've news—sad news for Britain. Now, my boy,
A bargain with you. Soon the palace gates
Will ope and let the long procession forth
That shall attend this day's solemnity,
The consecration of the golden Crown.

PHILANDER. What then?

DORDAN. I'll follow thee to the temple, though
 Forbid myself to enter. Sooth to tell,
 I'd rather wait without. Attend, Philander,
 My motions at the gate. Be at the porch;
 Should I abeent me for a time, fear not,
 But watch my coming back. What I've to tell,
 Mayhap, shall much import.

PHILANDER. I shall obey.

DORDAN. Retire. The train come forth. The King, the
 Queen,
 And all the court, adore the golden crown,
 Though worth but half of what the iron swayed.

[*Music. Enter, in procession, SMITH bearing the golden crown, &c., as in the next scene, and then ceant. DORDAN and PHILANDER follow. Loud music.*]

SCENE III.—THE TEMPLE OF APOLLO—*the veil down over the statue and altar. Loud and triumphant music.*

Enter, in procession, SMITH bearing the golden crown, DUNWARRO, MARCELLA, FEEBEX, HEEMON, KING GORBUDOC, QUEEN VIDENA, and many others, with PHILANDER. Enter a PRIEST to them.

PRIEST. Here pause awhile, until it please the god
 Withdraw the veil from his mysterious shrine.

KING. Priest, willingly within the antefane
 Our progress stays. In reverence we wait
 The leisure of the gods.

[*Exit PRIEST.*

DUNWARRO. 'Tis wisdom's part,
 O King, to cherish prudence. Wherefore this
 Delay?

VIDENA. 'Tis but a solemn ceremonial
 To make the consecration seem more sacred.

KING. Videna, *seem*?

DUNWARRO. Your majesty says well—
Why aught that only *seems*? Gods, to my soul
All fraud is adverse, even pious fraud;
Though in the undisciplined, unsuspecting youth
Of the yet schooling world, advisedly
Promoted—but with years increases caution;
And manhood scorns deception as unuseful,
And insolent withal.

KING. Wise saws are these,
Dunwarro; whereto tend the same? for, sure,
There are no pointless epigrams from thee.

DUNWARRO. I hope not, good my liege. Time well I
deem
Most sacred of all powers, nor would profane
Or idly waste his gifts.

KING. Speak thy conceit.
DUNWARRO. The oracle, my Lord?
KING. I would inquire,
As I have cause for doubt, if the division
Of empire be decreed as happily
To prosper, as 'twas honestly designed.

DUNWARRO. And they may fit ambiguous responses,
Not of the god, but pleasing to the King.
Such practice hath been witnessed.

KING. Hath it so?
And are there, Heaven, who minister thy temples,
Hirelings, in thine all-hallowed name, who trade
In falsehood? Sleep thy thunders? Have the clouds
Quenched the red lightnings in their treacherous folds?
Or sits a lie on the transcendent throne?

DUNWARRO. Truth sitteth there, whereto this knee doth
bend
In lowliest adoration, as beseems.
But priests are men, and men are sometimes weak,
In virtue or in courage.

KING. In this strait
 What counsel wouldest thou give ?
 DUNWARRO. Recall the priest,
 And, with such questions as the god inspires,
 In his own temple, test his honesty.

KING. Page, bid the priest return into our presence.

[*Exit* PHILANDER.]

VIDENA. With pious trust I hold this caution needless ;
 Yet will await the trial, calmly sure
 The god will vindicate his minister.

Re-enter PRIEST.

KING. Priest of Apollo, weighing well thy office,
 As thou wouldest answer to the god himself,
 Resolve me, whether, here, we rightly seek
 What anxiously we pray for ?

PRIEST. Rightly—if
 The truth ye would inquire—not flattery.

KING. How will the god reply to our demand ?

PRIEST. Even from the tripod which yon veil conceals,
 With his great altar and divinest image.
 —We but await a vestal to ascend
 The sacred seat, then in her soul the god
 Will enter and reveal the will of fate.

DUNWARRO. My daughter's even as such.

KING. Most true, Dunwarro.

White as the winter's is her maiden wreath—
 As free from stain, as pure from evil touch—
 Nay, as the tresses of the sun-god's hair,
 Or as the very essence of his eye,
 In radiance unpolluted, unapproached.

VIDENA. And let the Queen speak in her favour too.
 Chaste as the violet in the early spring,
 Yet not I hope too early, though the earliest
 Be aye the chaste . . . chaste as they are young,
 The sisters of the snow-drop lately dead.

KING. The god himself shall render proof of this.
Priest of Apollo, may she serve the shrine?

PRIEST. Most surely, gracious King; while, on the altar,
The crown is consecrating, there she'll sit,
Awaiting inspiration; and that done,
She'll feel the god within her, and so speak.

KING. Fairly consented. Sweet Marcella, thou
Hast heard.

MARCELLA. With trembling heart, yet innocent,
But awed with this great duty, I submit—
Both to my king's appointment, and my sire's.

VIDENA. Heroic maiden, blessings tend on thee.

KING. Go bravely, with thy monarch's benizon
On thy young duteous head.

DUNWARRO. Thy father's, too.

Take her, right-worthy priest, and fit her, instant,
For this religious office. Now, if ever,
A guileless prophetess may challenge faith.

[*Exeunt MARCELLA and PRIEST.*

VIDENA. Ferrex, my son, why standest thou so rapt?
Why gazest thus on her departing form?

FERREX. Half of my kingdom were well lost for her.
If thus the gods decree my recompense,
I grant their equity they vindicate,
In ample retribution.

VIDENA. Hush, my son,
The place is holy; be it thine to wish
Thy brother had been present at this trial,
That heaven's own fire might cleanse his jealous breast,
When all the god glows in her.

—But lo, where
The veil unfolds.

[*The veil draws up, and presents the altar and
image of APOLLO, with MARCELLA seated on the
tripod. All kneel.*]

KING (*taking the crown and approaching the altar*).
 O fourfold sacred power—and yet most one.
 Sole source of harmony, and (being one)
 Prophet divine of truth, whose freedom is
 The health of all the worlds, the light, the life
 Of all the suns—far-shooting, arrowy god.
 Thy fourfold holy benizon we pray
 Upon the golden type of royal power;
 And since of nobler metal than of yore
 The mystic circlet shows, be that great thing
 It represents more procreant of true glory—
 The truth, the peace, the plenty, of the land.

[*Disposes the crown on the altar—the PRIEST sheds incense upon it from a censer, saying—*
 With fourfold blessing be this crown
 Enriched. God, shed thy blessing down.
 Fear let it dart, to quench all strife,
 Comfort to them, who love its life—
 Truth in its beams most clearly shine,
 And peace dwell in it, as in thine.

MARCELLA (*rising, as if inspired*).
 The gods are wroth. Be this the token—
 The iron crown shall all be broken.
 They keep the golden for their own,
 Till peaceful it shall reign alone.

[*The veil drops before the altar and crown—the image and the PROPHETESS. All rise in alarm.*]

KING (*after a pause*). Doth no one speak?

VIDENA. The gods—in yon pale missive,
 Who enters now.

Enter PHILANDER.

KING. Philander,—why so wan?

PHILANDER. The priest did bid me watch the temple
 gates;

When Dordan, all in haste, and casting from him
 Impertinent speech, as 'twere a slough he tired of,

Or which the time tore from him, bade me in
With sorry news, ill-fitted for a jibe.

FERREX. With sorry news.

PHILANDER. Thy brother is in arms.

KING. Porreo in arms ? 'gainst whom ?

FERREX. Against his brother.

I knew it would be so. Return, and tell him
We are prepared.

KING. Prepared ? The gods, indeed,
Are wroth, are very wroth. O Ferrex ! Porreo !
Lift not your stubborn hands 'gainst one another.
Ferrex, behold thy father ; pity him.

FERREX. I must defend myself.

(Crossing to SMITH).

Smith—mark me, sirrah ;
Thy sturdy hand must change its craft once more,
And work in iron—steel—the glorious steel
That flashes, like the sun-light, vividly
In the proud hero's eye. The bright sword, smith,
Thou must make sharp ; the spear-head must be keen ;
The helmet and the hauberk must be true—
For war hath put the clarion to his mouth,
And blows ere long the blast.

(To HERMON)

Now, Hermon, I design to profit well
By the gods' teaching.

HERMON. Thou wilt trust to something
More stable than thy former good intentions.

FERREX. I'll take the means that worldly men like thee
Give warrant for. No more I'll walk in air,
But on firm earth. Be thou assured of this,
My faithless brother—that no more I lose
Kingdom or mistress, even unto thee.

[*Exeunt* FERREX, HERMON and SMITH.

KING. Must ? It is true. What have I done amiss ?
The horses of the sun have gone stark mad,

reel along the heavens. Old earth reels too,
all is out of balance. Have I drunken
cup of madness in my lusty youth,
with a grinding rule my people swayed?
poor have I oppressed? Or thou, dread Queen—
t thou been false, and brought me for thy brood
seed of wolves? O fool; it cannot be.
ad the proud reproaches of thine eye—
sna, pardon. No, I am *royal* yet,
of the line whose privilege it is
e more wretched than the rest of men—
ownèd misery.

[*Falls into VIDENA's arms, supported by DUN-
WARO.*]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—THE TEMPLE OF APOLLO, *as before.*

The veil raised, KING GORBUDOC kneeling at the altar, VIDENA and DUNWARRO, the PRIEST in the back-ground.

VIDENA. Hadst thou but heeded my soliciting—

KING (*rising*). It had been to recall my kingly word.

VIDENA. It had been thus; and may not Kings repent?

KING. Alas, no more than gods: and they are gods,
Yet human; wise, but not all wise, and err
Like other mortal seed. Who reign, should be
Gods altogether, not in part. O for
The measure of their excellence. But earth
Has never yet beheld a perfect King.

DUNWARRO. Hath Heaven?

KING. 'Tis right. Nought but old Fate is pure,
And gods and men and nature bow to it,
The ineffable, whose will is never known
Till acted. Happily, some forgotten charm
Attached to that wrecked gold, concerning which
Thus destiny becomes oracular.
May we not pluck it from the altar here,
And cast it to the waves wherfrom it came?

PRIEST. 'Tis holy now, and hath, thou sawst, been taken
Into the gracious keeping of the god,
Who, as I deem, for thee preserves it so
Till this great strife shall cease.

VIDENA. He speaketh well,
My royal Lord. This priest hath spoken well.
For Fate on such things hangs not its high will,

But on man's own ; therewith it worketh what
It works, and therefore holds us liable
For whatsoe'er results ; hence, blame we not
Calamity, but proper indiscretion.

KING. A bitter physic givest thou to me,
Videna.

VIDENA. O my Lord ; I speak the truth.

DUNWARRO. Lady, it may be better than we think.
For it appears Philander's complete news,
As told by Dordan, has this further scope—
That, hard upon his heels, a herald came,
Haply with words of peace, to compromise
The differences at issue. Well it were
Your majesties should now advantage ye
Of this same holy place wherein ye are,
For your protection. War even would not venture
To violate this sanctuary ; and here
The herald would be shielded in his duty
No less by this pure roof than his good office.

PRIEST. 'Tis wisely counselled. There may ye repose,
And of the type and diadem of power
Keep sacred guard yourselves.

[PRIEST takes the crown from the altar and places
it on GORBUDOC's head, who kneels.]

Within, there is

A chamber that is fitting.

KING. Lead. We follow. [Exeunt.

DUNWARRO (manet). There comes, I see, Marcella with
the herald.

Enter MARCELLA followed by PORREO, disguised as a herald.

PORREO. May I depend upon thy faith ? This garb—
Will it prevail to save a friend of Porreo ?

MARCELLA. The herald still is sacred ; and this place,
My father's presence, too—

DUNWARRO. I pledge my word
That thou art safe, though thou wert Porreo's self.

PORREO. Though I were Porreo's self?

MARCELLA. I know thy voice.

PORREO. Then know my countenance. See, at thy feet
Thy lover kneels. He comes to claim the heart
Erewhile was his.

MARCELLA. Ere he conceived ambition.

PORREO. Ambition—I confess I have ambition.
I pant to see Marcella wear the crown
Her beauty merits; such as well befits
The daughter of Dunwarro.

DUNWARRO. Tempt not me,
Young man, with such suggestions.

PORREO. Why, I thought
Thou wert a statesman.

DUNWARRO. Thou hast said it, boy.
A statesman, who is worthy of the name,
Is one whose heart is as the seat of truth;
Whose mind is as the sacred house of law;
Whose will the chamber of all equity.
The graces that in other men are single,
In him are but integers of his virtue;
Which is a thing so perfect, so complete,
He has no other interest but his country's.
Thy wild desire would wound her womb with hoof
Of battle-steed; and with the scythèd car
Would mow, like rankling grass, her patriots down,
And make a desolation of her fields.
He is no statesman who could help thy cause,
Though its success might crown his daughter Queen
Of entire Britain on both sides the Humber.
Cursed would she be in such a King as thou,
Who needest such a statesman as the base
Alone esteem—a selfish tool of wrong.

PORREO. Are thus my proffers flouted? Rail ye thus
As at a traitor? Why? Because enforced
To claim the maiden stolen from my heart.

DUNWARRO. By whom ?

PORREO. By Ferrex.

DUNWARRO. Treacherous pretext

For this unnatural strife. Most vain pretence.

Seal but thy peace with thy too generous brother—

She is thy wife, as she was thy betrothed.

Marcella, go, discover princely Ferrex,

And, with such influence as in thee commands him,

Conduct him hither. [Exit MARCELLA.]

PORREO. Wouldst thou, sir, betray me
Into the power of my enemy ?

DUNWARRO. Thy enemy ? Thy brother. Fear thou not
His honour, as I answer it with mine.

PORREO. Thine ? his ? And by what magic charmst
thou him ?

The spell of her sweet looks ? And shall I bear

My rival ushered by the maid I love ?

Why—look I like an idiot, that thou deemst

I can be cozened with a trick so gross ?

DUNWARRO. Have patience.

Enter VIDENA.

VIDENA. Whence this noise ? What man is he ?

PORREO. Thy son.

VIDENA. Ha!—But be hushed. Thy father sleeps.
His sorrows have in slumber found repose
Within yon chamber. Do not waken him ;
Unless, as thou dost wear the herald's garb,
Thou bearst his peaceful message.

PORREO. O, my mother,
Why have I not in thy spacious heart
That equal share of love a son may claim ?
Why to my brother art thou so profuse,
Supplying him with comfort from the spring,
And scarcely leavest a narrow rill for me
To drink at, though consumed with mortal thirst ?

VIDENA. I am not now in mood to brook reproaches;
 Therefore, reproach me not. I am thy mother;
 And with a mother's fondness cherished thee,
 An infant at my breast; unwillingly
 Was left of thy dear presence, and of thee.
 Sweet memories in thine absence still conceived;
 Nor with less warmth my heart expanded then,
 When, in thy manhood, suddenly these eyes
 Beheld thee well-accomplished in all graces,
 Beauty of person, eloquence of lip,
 Demeanour bold, and royal heroism—
 What hast thou lost to passion, lust of power?
 What glory, passing that of earthly kings,
 What riches, all the treasures of the world.

PORREO. Mother, I may not understand, perchance,
 The fashion of your court; yet have I learned
 Something—since nature taught me in this frame
 There beat a heart as haughty as my brother's,
 A wit as able, and a soul as brave.
 I read no law of inequality,
 That told me I was subject, he was King.

VIDENA. Poor is the spirit that's not rich enough
 To fancy virtue higher than its own—
 'Tis poorer than the brute that worships man.

PORREO. Because the man of higher order is—
 Brute unto brute is equal—man to man.
 Less than a god shall not be King to me.

VIDENA. Resign thou, then, the crown thou hast
 received,
 That thou be not a King to other men.

PORREO. Behold my answer. See, my rival, there,
 Led by my mistress.

Enter MARCELLA and FERREX.

Sir, well met. But first,
 Renounce that hand—'tis mine.

FERREX. Not till withdrawn.
Had it not willingly been placed in this,
It had not wooed me hither.

PORREO. Shame should scorch it,
If that unasked its unreluctant palm
Dared cope with thine, reluctant.

MARCELLA. Wherefore, Porreo,
Should it be shamed, by all fair means, to teach
Thy brother's hand, raised 'gainst thee by thyself,
Once more the way of peace?

PORREO. I want not peace.
War only can expect to reconcile
The enmitis that were engenderèd
Of the same mother.

VIDENA. Here she is. Repeat
Again that impious calumny. Thou liar!
War reconciles not, but destroys,—'tis death.
But it was life I gave to both of you—
Life from the fount of love.

PORREO (*leaping on FERREX, and seizing him by the throat*).
Art thou not, too,
A liar? Though thou speakst not with thy tongue,
Speaks not thine heart as mine?

FERREX. Unhand me, Porreo.

PORREO. Not I.

VIDENA. Unhand him, heathen (*seizes PORREO*).

Enter the KING.

KING. What, again!
Once I beheld thy weapon at his heart,
And (fool) believed thee honest. Now, once more,
Thy violent hands are on thy brother thus.
I dreamt of this—I had a dream of this—
While slumbering on the couch in yonder chamber;
And thou art here even as I dreamed. Thy brow,
It has a name of horror written on it.
On thy allegiance, quit thy murtherous hold.

VIDENA (*rending him away*). As well cope with the she-wolf as with me.

More than a woman's temper wakens here,
More than a woman's strength.

MARCELLA. Vehement Porreo,
If thou hast loved me ever, hear me now
Implore thee for thy good. Be placable.
Calm thy resentment; seek for pardon.

PORREO. Pardon ?
Here, Ferrex ; take the serpent from my feet.
—But, as thou ventur'est nigh to touch her only,
Beware lest vengeance grasp not both, and stab,
Stab one heart through the other.

DUNWARRO. It shall not need—
I take her from thy person.

PORREO. What art thou ?

DUNWARRO. Her father.

PORREO. What is that ? My parents, sir,
Have Madness for their son !

[*Exeunt DUNWARRO and MARCELLA.*

KING. And what have ye,
Sons, for your father ?—Whom shall I acquit
Of what has made his head grow bald with folly,
Which wisdom should have silvered ?—Both of ye,
O disobedient and rebellious men,
Are children of Astonishment and Terror.
Ye are justly punished both. Ah, Ferrex, Ferrex,
Who wert the first to violate thy duty,
Thou hast been justly paid—by him, whom thou
Preferredst to thy father.

FERREX. My dread sire,
Thus humbly on my knees, I pray thee, hear
A plea so righteous that, before Apollo,
I give it venturous breath. Who knoweth not
What dreams, though waking, had beguiled my youth
With glorious shades of virtue, unattained

By mortal man. I grant by Heaven, yet still
I was deceived; and recompense is none
For generous purpose. Fair the vision is,
But false.

KING. No, son. But thou wert faithless—feared
To try that to the end, which will be tried
Full oft till death; and what it *here* denies
There treasures for us—in the glad hereafter.
Think.—Canst thou vouch thy motive was so pure,
As righteously might challenge instant guerdon?

PORREO. No, 'twas, be sure, as foul as 'twas unfilial.

FERREX. Thou seizedst once on me—Now, false ingrate,
Defend thyself.

[*Draws—PORREO also draws, but the KING throws himself between them.*]

PORREO. Come forth, my trusty sword,
My hand shall pledge thy hilt. Marcella be
The bride of Ferrex, if Marcella will.
But Porreo shall wed thee. Come forth, my bride
Of steel, thou bright and beautiful. I've loved
Thy flashing smile full long, my own betrothed,
The chosen of my heart. Impatient thou,
Thy plighted love were wedded? There, pale maid,
But, anon, radiant blushes glow on thee—
Thou art panting, now, for glory. Our love-bower,
All roses, blooms. Sweet, thou'rt unveil'd. I burn,
In gazing on thy naked loveliness,
Whose dower is blood.

KING. Thy father's! Sheathe your swords
Here in your father's heart. Sirs, ye wound not
Yourselves so much as me, who gave you life—
Ye clench at your CREATOR your foul fists,
And smite the image of the god, religion
Commands ye worship. Not a blow ye aim,
But makes Apollo shudder with remorse;
And his fine sympathy, dwelling in me,

With agonistic pains of gory sweat,
 Threatens my dissolution. Ye care not,
 Though all the angry words, ye cast together,
 Be pointed arrows in your parents' hearts—
 Though every scowl, ye bend on one another,
 Swell as a black cloud there, and burst in thunder
 Within the last recesses of their souls.
 Ye care not, though your mother, where she stands,
 Stiffen to marble, and grow speechless with
 Passion too big for utterance. Shame, oh, shame,
 I muse that it should burn not through your cheeks,
 Calcine the lashes of your eyes, and molten
 Into twin jelly globes those orbs themselves,
 Swimming in fire, consuming and dissolving,—
 Nay, that, like liquid fire within the blood,
 It melt not through the marrow and the flesh
 That's in and on the bones, with bones and all.
 Sure, shame should thus reveal himself in you,
 A god, like Jove, when arrogant Semele
 Perished for her presumption. What's the spell
 That fascinates my vision? I'll not gaze
 On you to see your blasting. Never more
 Would I fain look on either.

[Exit.

PORREO. Brother, I go. We meet again in battle.

FERREX. I fear not thee—thy prowess nor thy skill.

[Exit at opposite sides.

VIDENA. Am I indeed a she-wolf, and but guelved
 When these were born? Ferocious impulses
 Speak to me from within, and horrible
 Suggestions make my heart a charnel-cave,
 Where creatures loving carnage meet to revel.

Re-enter the KING.

KING. Gone? Have they gone?

VIDENA (solemnly). They have—worse foes than when
 They met.

KING. Can I help that, thou speakest thus
With emphasis?

VIDENA. With emphasis?

KING (*angrily*). Yes—echo;
With intonation, as if, from the deep,
Thou calledst, with a charm, the fiends of strife.
Why, with that dim upbraiding look, gaze on me,
Videna?

VIDENA. Gaze on thee? Wherefore art angry?
And why with me? And what avails it here?
For am I not accursèd in my children?
And what can thy wrath add to that affliction,
Or Heaven's own plagues themselves? Come—rail and
rave,
That it may turn the current of my soul
Into less bitter channel. Try it now—
And own how vain thy age's craftiness (*smiling hysterically*).

KING. Thou laughest at me, even thou, Videna.
'Tis true, I am thy elder; but not much—
Some few years;—nor am I, like Clotyn, old
To a miracle:—nay, am still, or was, a day
Or two ago, a vigorous man; who, but
For love of his two sons, might still have held,
For many years to come, with no slack hand,
The sceptre; and may yet this golden crown
Wear as my own. Videna, nay, Videna,
I'm not so old, that thou shouldst laugh at me
For a despisèd driveller.

VIDENA. Ha, ha, ha! (*laughing hysterically*.)

KING. O, agony, what force is on thee now?
Pray, Jove, thou craze not.

VIDENA. Ha, ha, ha!

KING. Videna,
Weep—weep; laugh not, Videna.

VIDENA. Ha, ha, ha! (*she falls—KING stands petrified
with pity and terror.*) [Scene closes.

SCENE II.—FIELD OF BATTLE.

Men cross, fighting. Trumpets sound. Enter DUNWARBO, FERREX, and Soldiers.

DUNWARBO. O dire effects of civil war. Thy brother Loegra abets, and Cambria, with their Dukes—
But Inmer's men lie dead upon the field,
And Cambria now has with Albania leagued,
To meet us in fresh battle. Will it please thee
To heed my counsel, Prince?

FERREX. When turned I ever
A deaf ear to thy wisdom?

DUNWARBO. Once—or these
Mischances had not been.

FERREX. I see my error—
But spare me thy rebukes.

DUNWARBO. Here then we part—
Thou to the left, and I unto the right.
Make onset thou on these confederate hosts
With thy whole force; whiles I, with my six hundred,
Inquire my way where Inmer's men lie slain.
These found, their bodies yield their armour up,
In clothing for my troop, whom, thus disguised,
Will I guide on to where the enemy
Think themselves most secure; assault them there,
Ere they detect the feint, and, that achieved,
Rear high my ensign for thyself to note,
Even from the opposite quarter of the field;
Which seeing, take new courage, and confirm
Victory by instant action.

FERREX. Wisely planned.

DUNWARBO. Now then to work. March on—these men
are mine. [Exit.

FERREX. These, mine. I have no heart for this day's work,
Yet is constraint upon me to perform it.

[*Trumpets—exeunt omnes.*

SCENE III.—ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD.

Enter PORREO and ENYON.

PORREO. Enyon, I am well pleased with thy suggestion. It shall be so. Let all the wells be poisoned, That he who drinks may drink his death. Provide Our army first, and let each man among us Have order to abstain from brook or fountain. Match us in force they may—but not in guile. Our courage, backed with cunning, cannot fail. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—INTERIOR OF THE TEMPLE, *as before.*

VIDENA *discovered seated at the altar.* King GOEBUDOC and MARCELLA *in front of the stage.*

MARCELLA. Was ever maid so wretched? Forth hath gone
My sire against my lover, him to slay.
War terrible, when nation against nation
Meet in fierce strife upon the neutral field—
But, when 'tis house 'gainst house, or, worse than so,
The family within 'gainst one another,
Parent 'gainst child, and brethren against brethren—
Not only terrible art thou, O war,
But odious, without honour, without heroism,
Nothing but blood and tears, and broken hearts.

KING. Life has for thee a long and hopeful way
 For happy travel yet. For thee remain
 Yet many flowery paths and pleasant views—
 And well for thee that still, within the springs
 Of those fair eyes, abides a fount of tears—
 Would that Videna's matron orbs might pour
 Such plenteous shower, or shed one slender drop ;
 Then might the silent stubborn misery,
 That eats her up, solution hope to find.

VIDENA (*rising*). 'Tis done. Sweet pity's angel for thy
 griefs,
 Marcella, felt what I might not for mine.
 Thy tender plainings made me pity thee,
 For there was that in them was pitiable.
 Thy griefs had not outgrown all sympathy ;
 And, while thy tears were flowing, mine began,
 And once again this heart is almost human.

KING. Videna, then again thou knowest me ?
 Thou art not now a fearful mockery
 Of age and sorrow and infirmity,
 But hast to me returned a gracious Queen.

VIDENA. Returned indeed. For on a distant journey
 I verily have been—and, in my trance,
 My heart was hardened to a rock—and is.
 Yet am I bent to meet the worst can chance—
 And that the worst will happen well I know.
 But I am armed—am rigid—every nerve
 And fibre of my body is upstrung,
 Like a set harp, for the dread solemn music
 That fate means it to utter. I but bide
 The period that is doomed—nor shall wait long.

Enter PHILANDEE.

KING. Well, speak thy business, boy.

PHILANDEE. A horseman comes
 Flying this way with such unearthly speed,
 I could not choose but tell thee.

KING. Forth again,
And watch his course. [Exit PHILANDER.]

VIDENA. His course is hither. Yes,
The end hastes on.

KING. But it may not be evil—

VIDENA. It must be.

KING. 'Tis the kindness of the gods
To me, that they do make thee thus despair;
Whence, seeking to compose thy mightier woe,
I minister that comfort to us both
I had scorned else myself.

Re-enter PHILANDER.

PHILANDER. The horseman is
Prince Porreo: he has dashed him from his steed,
And now is entering. [Exit PHILANDER.]

KING. Calmly now, Videna.

VIDENA. Fear me not, King—I am calm—I am stone—
and thou?

KING. A wave that waits the wind.

Enter PORREO.

KING. What dost thou here?
To make submission, as a conquered man,
That thou hast left alone the field of battle?

PORREO. I am a conquered man—who has lost all.

KING. Thou mightst have lost it to a sterner foe,
Who would make no return—but, if repentant,
Thou'rt still our son. Thy brother, then, is victor?

PORREO. He too is vanquished—

KING. Speak not riddles, boy.
There was no third for victor o'er ye twain.

[PORREO remains silent.]

VIDENA. I know it, ere thou tellest me—yet speak.

PORREO. Ferrex lives not.

VIDENA. And it was thou who slewest him?

PORREO. Alas!

VIDENA. In open fight, or by a secret stroke?

PORREO. In opeh fight, and not by secret stroke.

VIDENA. On the fair plain?

PORREO. My mother, even so.

MARCELLA (*to VIDENA*). And is it in thy heart to question thus;

When Ferrex lies upon the bloody field,
Slain by his brother?

PORREO. Thou, Marcella, thou?

MARCELLA (*to PORREO*). Hence, for I find thou hast led my heart astray,

Which now I read aright—which should have loved him,
For virtues such as I ne'er saw in thee—

Misled by thy fair outside, how untrue.

How comely was the frankness of thy brow,
How princely was thy cheerful countenance,
How manly was thy breast, thy arms how lithe,
Thy limbs how graceful in their symmetry.

When thou wert mounted on thy generous steed,
For chase or tilt, with favours in thy helm,
At leisure or in tourney, never man

Was better formed to charm a lady's eye,
Was worthier seen to win a lady's heart.

But HE did wear the beauty in his soul,
The fitness we admired was in his mind,
And grandeur by his spirit was upheld.

There, where he lies on the red field of death,
Will I find out his corse, and, gazing on it,
Proclaim unto his spirit, hovering near,
What love I felt for him—but now first known.

[*Exit MARCELLA.*

PORREO. Now am I lost, indeed. Abandoned thus,
To whom for safety shall I now repair?

KING (*coming solemnly forward*). To me.—Look in my
face—thou canst not?—Ah!—

Well—well. I will be calm as is thy mother.
She sets me good example—I will learn it—

Gods, gods! I'm patient. Tell thy tale right out,
That I may know what exculpation—what
Atonement has been—or is needed—speak.

PORREO. Father, with wounded soul, I will obey.
The armies met—I saw him at the head
Of valiant numbers; wrath, and pride, and hate,
And jealousy, ay, and a thousand passions,
Which now his blood has quenched, perplexed my brain—
I sought him—he avoided me—but still
Him I pursued from point to point, till, seeing
Our party got advantage by the turns
He was compelled to take, to avoid my hunt,
He stood at bay. He fought, and with a valour
That showed he shunned me not from cowardice;
And I confess, with evident regard,
Forbore to smite me, when 'twas in his power.
But hell urged on my arm, and I smote him,
Even to the death. Then victory seemed mine—
But, at the moment, from the southern side,
Dunwarro, leading on slain Inmer's troops,
A troop of ghosts—(for so they seemed to me
In my confusion)—rushed from midst the lines
Of my own ranks, and, putting all to rout,
With tresses wildly rent, unhelmed and shieldless,
Scarce left me leisure to escape.

KING. And better
Had it been for thee thou hadst ne'er escaped.
Come, bare thy breast, and let my sword dig deep
Thy false heart from thy bosom.

VIDENA. Seize upon
The altar's horns, O Porreo, and be safe. [He does so.
For thee, O Gorbudoc, of Brutus' line,
Thou monarch of the ancestry of Troy,
This vengeance fits not thee. No, nor thine age,
Nor famous memory, shall be stained with blood.

KING. 'Twere divine justice should I kill him now.
 —Thy temple, and thy shrine, Apollo, guard him ?
 Restraine me not, aught holy, aught divine,
 Lest I grow mad. Ye gods, are ye not fathers ?

[*Pacing round the stage in agony.*]

PORREO (*having taken refuge at the altar, kneeling.*)
 What can I make of this ? Surprise confounds me.
 My mother, like the statue of a god,
 Stands, in indifferent majesty serene,
 As if the dead were nothing, having left
 One of her children living ; while my sire,
 In vehement transport, circles round the fane,
 With infinite swiftness, like a thunder cloud
 Driven by a whirlwind o'er a wilderness.
 Gods ! terrible for him who slays his brother
 To meet again his parents, terrible.

KING (*suddenly stopping.*). Then be it so. But what it
 is forbid
 A father's sword to do, is not forbid
 A father's curse. Hear me, thou sun, whose beams
 Were not turned back when this misdeed was done.
 Hear me, and consecrate my words for things ;
 Here in thy temple. Let him not go forth,
 Unstamped with malediction. Let my curse
 Be on him like a seal. Let it be in
 His flesh like to a shaft shot from thy bow,
 Apollo, and be mortal, as was that
 Which slew the Python. Is he not a snake,
 Who stung and slew his brother ?

PORREO. Sire and King,
 Withdraw these obtestations from the ear
 Of him who rules this shrine. A father's curse
 Is more than I can bear.

KING. What punishment,
 That man can bear, befits the fratricide ?

Stay with thy mother, if she can endure
The company of such a wretch as thou.
Myself will forth, and, like Marcella, seek
My slaughtered son upon the battle-field,
For whom I would have died. Thee contemplate
I will not—cannot—living. But like him
To look on thee a corse were happiness. [Exit.

PORREO. I have no refuge but in thee, my mother.

VIDENA. None, O my son!

PORREO. Thy son?

VIDENA. Yes—still, my son;
Albeit thy father cursed thee.

PORREO. Thou wilt curse
Me not?

VIDENA. No—for I waste not words.

PORREO. Strange—brief—
And icy is thy speech.
VIDENA. Wouldst have me praise,
(Because I will not blame,) in flowery phrase,
The deed which has deprived me of a son,
Whom once I loved as well as thee? And sure,
That love for thee was strong, which such a deed
Has not extinguished. From yon altar now
Thou mayst divorce thy hands. Come in with me
To yonder chamber, our sometime retreat,
While civil war was raging, to the which
Thou thus hast put an end. There will we talk,
In private, of this solemn business.

PORREO. I thank thee, mother;—and 'twill stead me
well—

For I am over-weary.

VIDENA. *Canst thou sleep?*

PORREO. What meanest thou?

VIDENA. Nothing.

PORREO. 'Twas my phantasy
That made the tone thou spakest in startle me.

Truly, events like these will try us sore,
Howe'er we brave them out, and make us live
Even in the unconscious hairs that point our flesh.
I am grown sensitive ; and, but that nature
Has been o'ertasked, should fear to slumber more.

VIDENA. In—in—*(aside)* Thy brother sleeps—
why shouldst not thou ? [Exit]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—FIELD AFTER THE BATTLE BY MOON-LIGHT.

Panorama of hill and forest, with groups of dead and dying.

Enter MARCELLA.

MARCELLA. Shadow, that fleetest over heath and hill,
That midst the dead and dying guidest me,
When wilt thou pause, and point the noble frame
In which the spirit once was liberal
Of all that woes and wins? O, Ferrex, stay.
Shew me thy corse, that I may clasp it thus;
And on thy cold, cold lips bestow the kiss
They never felt while living. Stay, O stay!
Illusion! 'tis a moonbeam cheats my vision;
Mantled in mist—and now it fades—it fades.
No spirit hovers to direct my search,
But through the horrors of this silenced plain
I wander, fear-distraught.

Enter PHILANDER.

PHILANDER. Lady Marcella.

MARCELLA. O, I am called; I come, dear shade, I come.
Rebuke me not, if I do seem afraid—
Pardon my shrieks—forgive me if I groan.
I have heard shrieks and groans along the field,
And they have taught my soul to echo them;
And I have wildly screamed, and tossed my arms,
In frantic terror, to the scornful moon,
That me before ne'er mocked. All things are changed—
The living is the dead—the dead is living;

SCENE II.—ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD.

Enter the KING, with DORDAN dressed as a mendicant.

KING. Thanks for thy service—though I know thee not—
Yet sometimes when my twilight mind took note
Of outward things, thy voice hath tones in it
With which I seemed familiar. What art thou?

DORDAN. A beggar, my good master.

KING. Why not work?

How camest thou to beg?

DORDAN. I was—a fool—

That is—in this world's ways. I could not learn
To care for things that other men much prize.
Their wealth, their state, were ostentatious gauds,
The which I thought it wisdom to contemn—
My wit, my parts, were personal accidents,
The which they thought it folly to esteem.
And so I made a world unto myself
Of thoughts and fancies, which, whene'er I uttered,
The world at large mistook for idiocies.

KING. So, so. The vain ones. And their drivelling cares,
To multiply their stores, and keep their power,
And their poor plans to purchase early ease,
They thought were pieces of consummate prudence.
'Tis criminal folly—they were the true idiots;
So they would know, had they but my experience.
Thus thou becamest a beggar?

DORDAN. Ay, good master.

KING. Well, well, 'tis all the same, whatever course
Of life we take. I am a beggar, too,
And yet I wrought by the opposite rule. There's nothing
For man to do, but trust the gods, and they
• The issues shape as pleases their great wisdoms.

DORDAN. It is most true.

KING. I could not find my son.

He lay not on the field (my son! my son!);

But I found thee, where I, from weariness,
Had sunk. Sure, I had lain instead of him,
But that a beggar raised me from the soil,
Moist—moist—with blood; ye gods, with human blood.

DORDAN. They have borne thy son away.

KING. Who? who? good fellow.

DORDAN. Dunwarro and his soldiers——

KING. Why, thou fool,

Thou toldst me so before.

DORDAN. Fool? So I am.

KING. I beg thy pardon, thou art but a beggar;
I ought to give thee value for thy service,
Having been once a King. But now I have nothing.
I called thee fool. These brows, though they look grave,
Have not with wisdom overmuch been burthened.
What's here? A crown?—of gold? It is not mine;
'Tis his—and he is dead—slain by his brother.
Fool; wouldst thou think it? I have nothing but
This gaud in all the world! He wants it not;
And there's another shall not have it; so
Take it, good fellow, for thy pains, and be
No more a beggar. Melt it down.

DORDAN (*aside*). This is
A sorry jest. Alas, my poor old King
Knows Dordan but by glimpses. (*to KING*) But, master,
My honesty will not permit my taking
So rich a prize.

KING. Thy honesty? part with it.
Ferrex was honest; nay, was generous,
And therefore he was killed. Wouldst thou escape
Worse even than beggary, part with honesty.

DORDAN. With safety, too, sometimes. They'd say I stole
This crown.

KING. Fool; 'tis not worth the stealing. Who
Hath that, has fear, and pain, and agony;
It weighs so heavy on the skull, the brain.

Is crushed, and then confusion comes, and madness,
And he who wears it knows not what he doth.
I will not take it back. Thou hast it—there—
Good luck go with it; I am rid of it.
Put'st it not on?

DORDAN. I am already capped.
A helmet would have better served our need,
Since I am thirsty to a thought, to catch
Some water when we find it.

KING. Come—come—come
Into the city. There is many a fountain—
Troth, but my own tongue's parched; though I forgot it,
Talking with thee. Ye gods! my sons—my sons!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE THE LAST.—EXTERIOR OF THE TEMPLE
OF APOLLO.

Steps leading up to the gates.

Enter ENYON and a crowd of people.

ENYON. ¶I tell you we have conquered. The King is good as dead. He has been drinking of the fountains which are all poisoned, and has not an hour to live. Some who have partaken of them are even dead already. Ferrex is dead—and Porreo therefore must reign. The prince is here, with his haughty mother, in this temple, the gates whereof are locked—but must be opened. Knock loud—
[*The people ascend the steps, knock at the gates, and shout vociferously, “Porreo, Porreo, King Porreo!”*]—louder—and call on Porreo, Porreo, King Porreo! No answer? O there's jugglery. We'll find a means. But see. There comes Dunwarro, with his procession and the corse of

Ferrex. His followers are well armed. We are not. Let us to the town, and supply our hands with what they need.

[*Exeunt clamorously.*

Trumpets. Enter DUNWARRO, MARCELLA, with three or four SOLDIERS (one bearing the crown of gold).

DUNWARRO. No further seek, my daughter : thou hast found

The living ; nor is distant far the dead.

Stretched on a bier, sustained in the embrace

Of faithful men who've for their country fought,

Slain Ferrex' corse approaches.

[*Solemn music.—Enter SOLDIERS carrying the body of FERREX on a bier, which they set down.*]

MARCELLA. Beautiful,
And lovely, art thou, even in thy death.
For sake of thee, and of thy noble goodness,
Wronged shade ! most solemnly I make my vow—
The unnatural hand that slew thee ne'er in mine
Shall pressure feel—the pleadings of his lips
My heart shall never hear. I banish him
From the deep memories of my haunted soul,
Which thou henceforth shalt fill to plenitude,
Its prince, its hero, and its only king !

DUNWARRO. A virtuous resolution, O my daughter !
And still to heal what civil war has vexed,
And grace the memory of restorèd peace,
To Concord straight a temple I'll erect ;
And since, because of what has chanced, a maid,
Marcella, thou art pledged to live and die,
Thereof thou shalt the vestal priestess be.

[*Exit MARCELLA.*

And now, brave mourners for the valiant dead,
Resume the honour'd corse ; and let the dirge
Throw once again its moanings on the wind,
While to the shrine ye bear your sacred charge. [*Music.*
Set wide the temple gates without delay.

Knock loud ! knock loud ! Within there ! who's within ?
 What ho ! what ho ! None answers ? Soft ; there comes
 The honest priest.

Enter the PRIEST.

Grant us, good priest, admittance.

PRIEST. I have sought it for myself, this hour or more,
 In vain. The Queen Videna, with Prince Porreo,
 Is there alone. Why they keep shut the gates,
 I cannot guess.

DUNWARRO. O ! did she know the need
 We have for instant entrance, she would match
 The speed wherewith the wedded eagle flies
 To soothe her dying mate.

PRIEST. King Gorbudoc ?

DUNWARRO. Ay, honest priest—even he. Couldst thou
 but see him,
 Where under escort he approaches hither.
 I sped but on before to make all ready.

PRIEST. What shape assumes the crime or accident ?

DUNWARRO. 'Tis both. Not long ago (having obtained
 Success in an apt stratagem, whereby
 Victory set foot upon Rebellion's crest,
 And spurned the brains out), joyously returning
 From our long labours in the well-fought field,
 We passed the fountain at the city gates.
 There, sitting, Gorbudoc himself we saw,
 And on his knees a seeming mendicant,
 Who, closely scanned, presented to our wonder
 Dordan, the sometime fool ; but he was dead,
 Having within his grasp this crown of gold
 Strictly secured, for to his charge the king
 The precious gift had in some way confided.
 It was not in me not to pity him ;
 For lately I found in him a kind of merit,
 The which before his office kept concealed.
 He had drunken of that fountain, and was poisoned.

So likewise had the king, who, from the field
Where lay his eldest son had been led thither,
Frantic almost in mind. 'Twould seem as if
Their feverish grief had kindled in them both
The appetite of thirst. Dordan is dead,
And Gorbudoc is dying. No more words—
They're bringing him this way. Knock at the gates,—
Make riotous onset; break through bolts and bars;
Bring levers here.

Enter the KING, supported by EUBULUS and attendants, with MARCELLA.

KING. Where bear ye me?

EUBULUS. To the temple.

KING. Ha! there I have a son *yet*. Remains the Queen?

DUNWARRO. Both, saith this priest, are there; but locked within.

KING. O, what? Ah, sure, I have drunk a draught from Orcus, It is so hot within me. Locked the gates! Why this? Why this? My wits I think were wandering; But the medicine of the poisoned spring hath called The truants back. Alas, evil is now So common I can dream of nothing else. Psha—there can be no harm.

DUNWARRO. Knock at the gates, I say.—What ho. (*They knock.*)

KING. Who poisoned all the wells?

DUNWARRO. Heed not of that, thou dying majesty. Look, how he suffers, yet how patiently.

KING (*to MARCELLA*). Come, my good girl. Ai—ai— let me not groan— Let me not groan. No—no—nor sigh, nor weep. Not weep? A cooling tear might soothe this fire. Let it rage—let it rage; for could I quench it, grief Were wild for thee, my Queen, and our young Princes.

DUNWARRO. Stand by, and give him air.

KING. Air? air? Not all
The winds could fan me into ease again.
I would bespeak Marcella.

DUNWARRO. Go to him.

KING (*to MARCELLA*). My daughter! Such thou hadst
been, if thy virtues

Had not made thee too well beloved—my daughter!

I die—I leave no heir to Britain's throne;

None—ne'er that fratricide shall sit upon it—

I looked to have seen thee Queen of one fair half.

Half—that division has divided all;

Brother from brother, parent from the child,

And lovers from each other; even the betrothed

Soul from the body. How mine struggles here.

She burns for freedom from the flesh she loathes.

My life pants forth; I'll bite my lip and keep

The fiery breath yet in. Well, that pain's conquered.

Marcella, take yon crown. Did not the god

Inspire thee with foreknowledge of this woe?

And promise peace when that should rule alone?

The iron crown *is* broken, and my line—

The line of Brutus—is without a claimant.

Thy father hath made peace. Let him succeed me.

Crown him. Dunwarro shall be King. It is

My dying will. Crown him, I say, while yet

My eyes can see, for they grow very dim.

DUNWARRO. Knock at the gates again. O royal
wife;

O princely son; is there not instinct in ye

To know who waits without, and in what need?

Videna! Porreo! Gorbudoc demands you—

Come forth, and aid him in the hour of death.

[*The gates open, VIDENA appears between them
at the threshold, where she stands immovable
in an erect attitude.*]

VIDENA. Whose clamour here disturbs the peace of gods?

DUNWARRO. The King requires admission.

VIDENA. Ha, old man.

Approach me not, for I am consecrate;
Not human, but divine; the immaculate
Goddess of justice.

DUNWARRO. What is this? Dread lady,
King Gorbudoc is at the point of death.

VIDENA. The better—

KING. O these pangs; yet I must question
The solemn mystery she hath late become—
Videna!

VIDENA. Thou beholdst the corse of Ferrex.

KING. Sad mother, ay, and soon shall see his soul.

VIDENA. Wouldst also look on the slain corse of
Porreo?

KING. How died he?

VIDENA (*descending the steps*). King, I say not he is
dead;
I but demand if thou wouldest see him so,
As ofce thou saidst to see him so were good.

KING. I would not see him living; and, anon,
These eyes will nothing see that's of this world—
Say, is he dead?

VIDENA. Not dead—he sleeps.

KING. Sleeps?

VIDENA. Ay (*coming forward*),
He sleeps. He sleeps? How can he sleep? His arm
Is wearied with long conflict, and his mind
With labour worn, sleeps—though the work was mortal.

KING. Now should I grieve, but that, without design,
Into my heart, which is a prisoner here,
Within a wall of flesh, a friend has come,
Who is battering down for me the dungeon barriers,
A faithful friend, yet sharp in his reproofs.

VIDENA. Sleep! makest no difference 'twixt the innocent
And guilty? Art thou a god indifferent
To crime or folly? Frequent I've been told
That conscience lived in dreams, and waked in sleep:
He hath a brother's blood upon his soul,
And yet he sleeps.

KING. Videna—O this fire.

VIDENA. My mother's heart. O pardon, Gorbudoc,
The wife's neglect. O King, why art thou thus?

KING. Videna, I am dying.

VIDENA (*coming closer to him*). Dying?

KING. Ay—

Pain, pain—'tis over. 'Twas in mercy given;
This corporal anguish calms the wounded soul,
That else were ravished into agony.
The gods have rightly judged.

VIDENA (*coming still closer*). Hast taken poison?

KING. By chance, not by design. The springs were poi-
soned.

VIDENA. Ha! and by whom? *He* told me, ere he fel-
Asleep, the manner of the war, and, chief,
This stratagem. He sleeps; but I sleep not.
I wander wakeful. Wherefore should he sleep?
Ha! why should he awake? Oracular
Slumber! thou image of stern death! 'Tis clear;
The mystery is made clear—I see it well.

[*Ascends the steps and looks into the temple.*
There is a rush of thoughts, like that of waves,
Filling the mind, as they the sea, with a voice
Of power in motion, irresistible.

[*Looking again into the temple, and going a little
way into it.*]

DUNWARRO (*to the King*). Let's help thee to the temple.

KING. To the dead?
No, I can die even here. 'Twill soon be passed;
Then I may look on him, unwounded by

The hand that bare him, in Elysium,
By that dread act of justice expiate.

DUNWARRO. What dream is this?

KING. The thought is in her heart!

VIDENA (*returning*). No; he *should* never wake again
(*descends the steps*). He smiles
In his sleep, as if he were a child; my child—
My only child. My only child! And why
My only—only child? A mother's heart pours gall
Upon the murderer of her son—of thee,
His father, too (*coming close to the King*)—

KING. 'Twas chance—he knew it not—
(*My sons! my sons!*) Or thou, or I am dying—
Thou lookst so pale: I touch thee, thou art cold—
Thou diest as thou standest—it is strange,
Looking how proud, even in death—severe,
But ever just. How are the royal fallen.
There; now I feel less pain—less pain—and now,
None—none. Farewell! (*dies.*)

VIDENA (*who has been absorbed in contemplating the King, now rouses as from a trance*).

Farewell? farewell. Alas!
That pallor and that coldness were thine own.
Thou art dead—I live alone. The avenger lives
Both of a son's and royal lord's foredoings.
"Chance," was it? There's no chance in anything;
But good and evil both are of design,
Or man's or gods', and must be answered for.
Wonder, he sleeps so long. Sore-wearied, he is lying
In yon far chamber. Chamber—where is it?
Apollo, in thy temple. Should a fane—
A sacred, holy fane—be desecrate
With murder? Who said murder? 'Twas not I—
Nor thou, Apollo. No; nor ye, ye Furies.
Whom mildly we bespeak, and not in fear—

At least not I—for I do love ye now—
 I love ye, O ye Furies. Beautiful,
 And calm, and most affectionate are ye ;
 For ye take pity on my double wrongs.

[*Tumult without; ENYON and a great crowd armed rush in, shouting “King Porreo; King Porreo!”*]

Are ye the Furies ? timely have ye come.
 But hush, else he will wake—King Porreo sleeps !

ENYON. We'll have him for our King. None else but he !

VIDENA. You'll have him for your King ? No Furies
 ye—

Our sometime subjects. Am I not your Queen ?
 Whom would you have for King ?

ENYON. Whom else but Porreo ?

VIDENA. Whom else but Porreo ? None else but he !
 Behold you, here, his sire ; and, here, his brother,
 Sleeping in death—death by his deed procured,
 Or acted—and he *there*, but dead in sleep.

ENYON. Dead ? Friends—

VIDENA. Your patience, prithee ! I but said,
 In sleep, even as these two sleep in death.
 I marvel at ye, ye can plead for him,
 The brother-slayer and the father-slayer.
 A people destined for dominion,
 (For I in this great hour can prophesy),
 Methinks, should rather crush such criminal,
 Than crown him ! I, his mother, loving him,
There mused how I might do the deed ? What means ?
 What instruments ? These hands were all too weak,
 And from the pillows of his couch I shrank ;
 For they would need more strength than woman hath,
 To crush a man, who is a reptile, yet
 Strong as a serpent or a dragonet,—
 Born of a dragon-mother !

ENYON. Horrid thought!
And yet thou smilest at it?

VIDENA. Yes, I smile.
I am his mother. What he did I can do.

ENYON. Break way into the temple—find King Porreo.

VIDENA. Dunwarro wears the crown, not Porreo;
And guards the temple, as ye see, with soldiers.

ENYON. Treason to Porreo! Citizens and friends,
We are the greater number—they must yield.
Besides, the city is in arms, to help us;
And, lo, they come by hundreds to our aid.

[*He looks out—approaching huzzahs are heard.*

VIDENA. Is it so? He sleeps soundly on his couch,
Or this would wake him. So, ye are bent upon it?
Well, ye shall have the monster for your King,
Who is not fit to live the meanest slave.
I'll bring him forth. But first I would dispose
These unregarded bodies (that, methinks,
Your plaudits would profane the presence of)
Within these hallowed chambers. Gentle priest,
I pray your office. We will order this—
(*To DUNWARRO*) Stay thou, and reason with these rebel men.

[*The curses of FERREX and the KING are borne
into the temple, led by VIDENA and MAR-
CELLA, and followed by PRIEST.*]

DUNWARRO. Trust in the Queen—she will bring forth
her son;
Nor doubt, I wear this crown against your wills,
Though set upon my brows by Gorbudoc;—
But, as to Porreo, let your own hearts speak.

[*Enter others, crying “King Porreo! King
Porreo! Porreo shall be King.”*]

It shall be so, then

[*As he is about to uncrown himself, a loud shriek
is heard from the temple.*]

What is that? (*shrieks repeated*).

Again!

Terror and pity, and all passions else,
Blend in those dismal cries.

Re-enter PRIEST, distractedly.

PRIEST. O hour of fate.

ENYON. What fate?

PRIEST. Here comes the doer of the deed,
The sternest yet was done. O mother earth!—
Ne'er to my dying hour shall I forget
What I have witnessed in yon temple's chamber.
Stretched on his couch, the princely Porreo lay,
As now he slumbers there—but not, as now,
A wound, wide as the gates of life and death,
Midst of his manly chest:—and, him beside,
Conscious of blood, the fatal weapon glowed,
Even his own battle sword, whose ruthless edge
Soon rent that hideous chasm.

Re-enter VIDENA, followed by MARCELLA, who, however, stops at the threshold of the temple, and upon the loftiest step where she sinks down, burying her face in her hands, and remains in that fixed attitude till the fall of the curtain.

VIDENA. Bring forth King Porreo—
Shew the rude people whom they'd have for king.

PRIEST. No, no; keep it within. 'Tis fit that now
Ye disobey her. See, she stands enrapt;
She notes us not while she is thus abstract.

VIDENA. Lay it on the earth—here, lay it at our feet.
PRIEST. She dreams she is obeyed, and that the corse
Of Porreo is brought forth and laid before her.

ENYON. Treason—most bloody treason. Swift revenge.
[*Clashing of swords, conflict.*

VIDENA (*disclosing the sword which she had previously concealed under her robes*). Look ye, I have his sword. Could this not sting ?

Couldst thou not, sword ? There is some blood upon thee, Which, having voice, saith, " Ask his brother's heart ? " Should it not sting his own ? Should it not, Heaven ?

[*Thunder heard.*

Thunder ? I'm answered.

(*Kneels*) Heaven, thy will be done.

The Oracle long said fulfils itself !

I kiss the blood upon thee.

ENYON. Whose is it ?

VIDENA. 'Tis Porreo's.

ENYON. Porreo's.

VIDENA (*rising*). Ay, your King's—my Son's.
'Tis his and Ferrex' blood, here blended now.

ENYON. How came to deed this horror ?

VIDENA. By this hand.

Some one remove that felon from my sight.

ENYON. Come with me, friends ; elsewhere we'll seek redress.

[*ENYON exit, others prepare to follow him.*

VIDENA. Stay ! Ye left no choice to me. He reign ?
he reign ?

O'er a great people, virtuous, free, and brave ?

He, fratricide and parricide at once !

Was't not immortal justice thus to wreak

The vengeance of a broken heart on him ?

'Twas worthy of that altar, of that place ;

That holy ground of all the general earth

Was fittest spot for such most righteous deed.

None other were so suited—it was sacred—

A deed so pure as consecrates anew

The temple where 'twas done, and should be done

Only in a temple, or make a temple there

Where it was done. Divinity of justice,

I feel thee—I confess thee—I am thine.

—Faint—give me strength; faint—faint—my brain is swimming—

My soul's escaping! Whither would it fly?

O the world fades.—Make room!—my heart would burst.

[*She swoons.*]

DUNWARRO (*leaning over her*). Whence hadst thou heart
this duty to perform?

VIDENA. There! there! 'Twas smitten, and I maddened
—now

'Tis broken, and I die (*falls as if dead, then rallies*). Reign
thou the King. [Dies.]

THE END.

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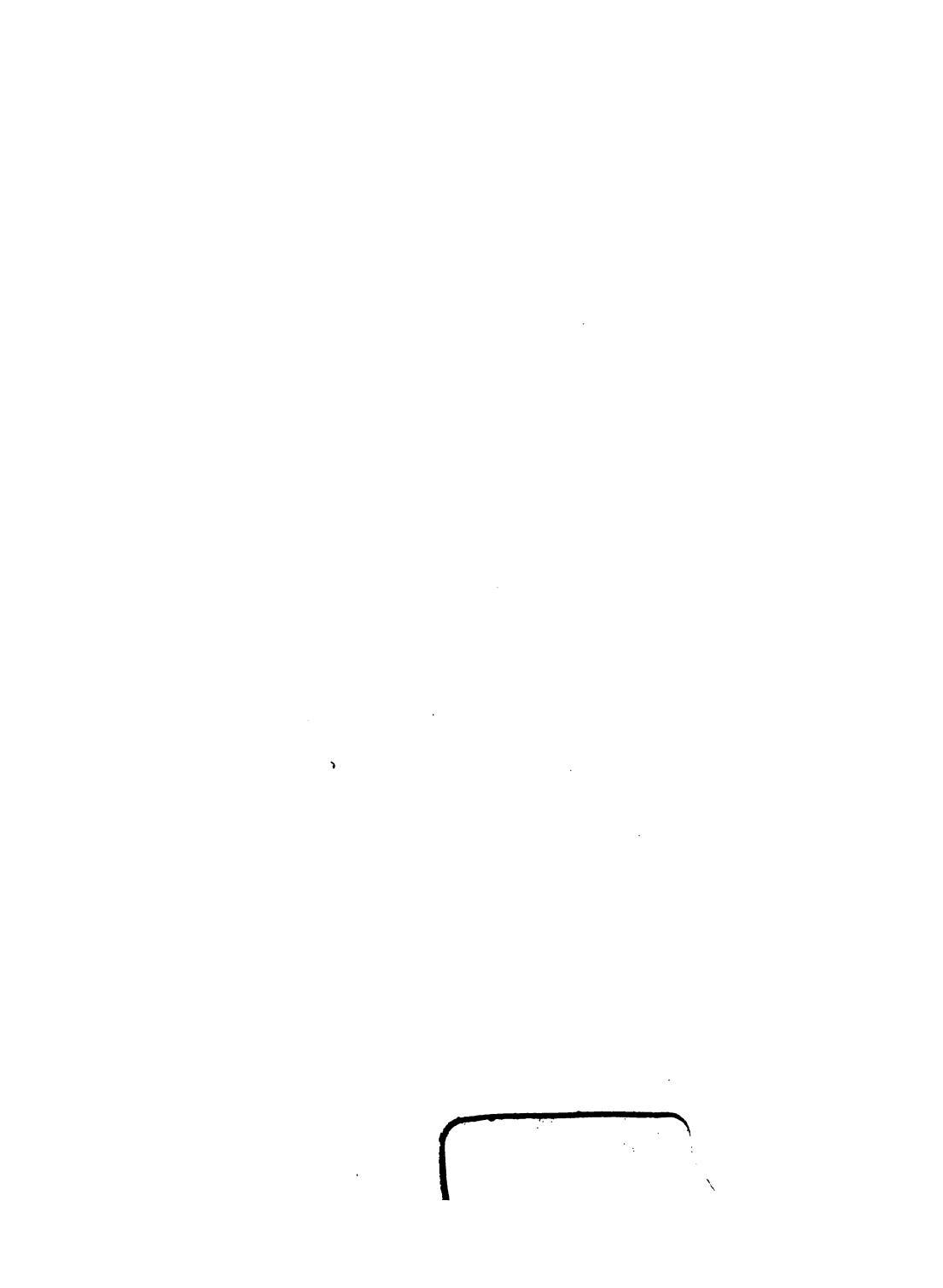


VIDENA;
OR, THE MOTHER'S TRAGEDY.
A Legend of Early Britain.

MANAGER'S ADDRESS.

The story of this national Play, taken from the "Chronicles of Geoffrey of Monmouth," the authenticity of which is asserted in many old Acts of Parliament, formed the subject of the earliest English tragedy in blank verse. It was written by Thomas Seckvill, Lord Buckhurst and Earl of Dorset, assisted by Thomas Norton; was represented before her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and her Court, on the 18th of January, 1561 (annalised in dramatic annals on that account as "the birth-day of English Tragedy"); and has been frequently reprinted. The present tragedy is however entirely original, and not indebted to its predecessor for more than the names of some of its characters. The story, though found, with that of "Lear," in the "Monmouth Chronicles," is not included in any History of England except that by John Milton, the author of "Paradise Lost," who gives the whole of the Chronicles, assigning for his reason that he does so "in favour of our English poets and rhetoricians, who, by their art, will know how to use them judiciously." One English poet—the greatest—Shakespeare, availed himself of these fabulous annals, in his tragedy of "Lear" already referred to. According to these, the royal Line that ruled over Britain commenced with one Brutus, a fugitive from Troy, and ended with the hero of the present drama. By way of illustrating the entire subject, a group of statues representing this Line is introduced into the second Act. These groups are from drawings and designs expressly made for the purpose by Alfred Patten, Esq. Their stories, with that of Videna, are also told by Spenser in his "Faery Queen," book ii., canto x. All are classical in their character, but nationalised by association with the British soil, and are eminently fitted, as Milton foresaw, for a series of national poems or dramas. They form, in fact, a remarkable cycle of narratives, containing in them the elements of Pity and Terror, which are, according to authorities, the two especial tragic passions. They are expressly suitable for the stage, because they admit of the wild and picturesque in costume and architecture, being dated prior to any known period of history, and therefore allowing full scope to fancy and invention. In the scenic illustrations of the tragedy now produced the management have paid particular regard to this circumstance, and have spared no pains to ensure the utmost novelty as well as appropriateness in the dresses and decorations. In great part, they are such as have never yet appeared on any stage—and it is hoped will prove as attractive by their originality as by their beauty.

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